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LESSONS
IN THE
KINGDOM

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

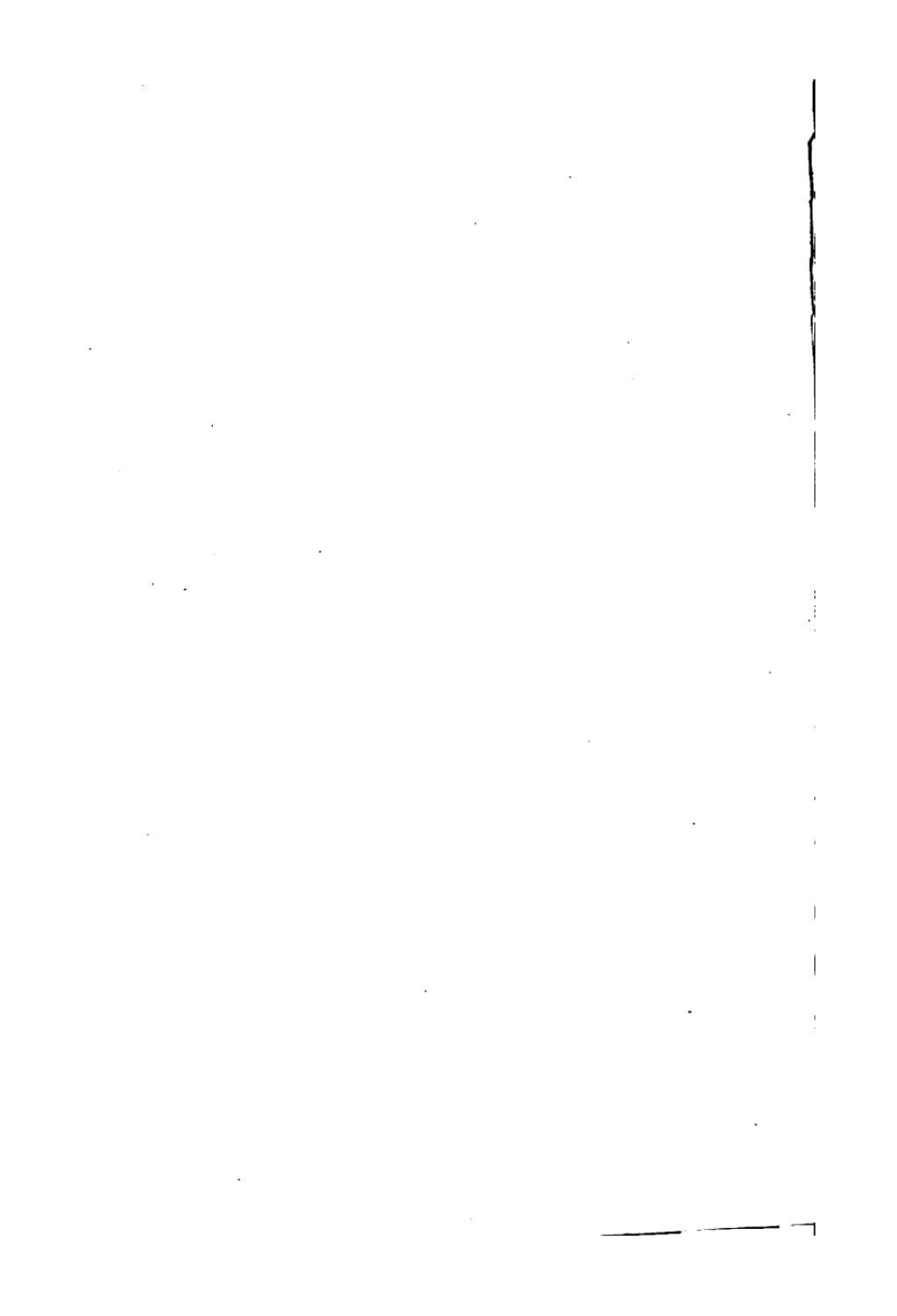
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FOR THE

Little Ones of the Church of England.

BY THE

REV. W. H. B. PROBY, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "STORIES ABOUT THE GREAT KING," "ECCLESIASTES FOR ENGLISH READERS," "THE TEN CANTICLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT" TRANSLATED, ETC.

A NEW EDITION.

"The things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—*Acts i. 2.*
"The kingdom of the Son of His love."—*Col. i. 18.*



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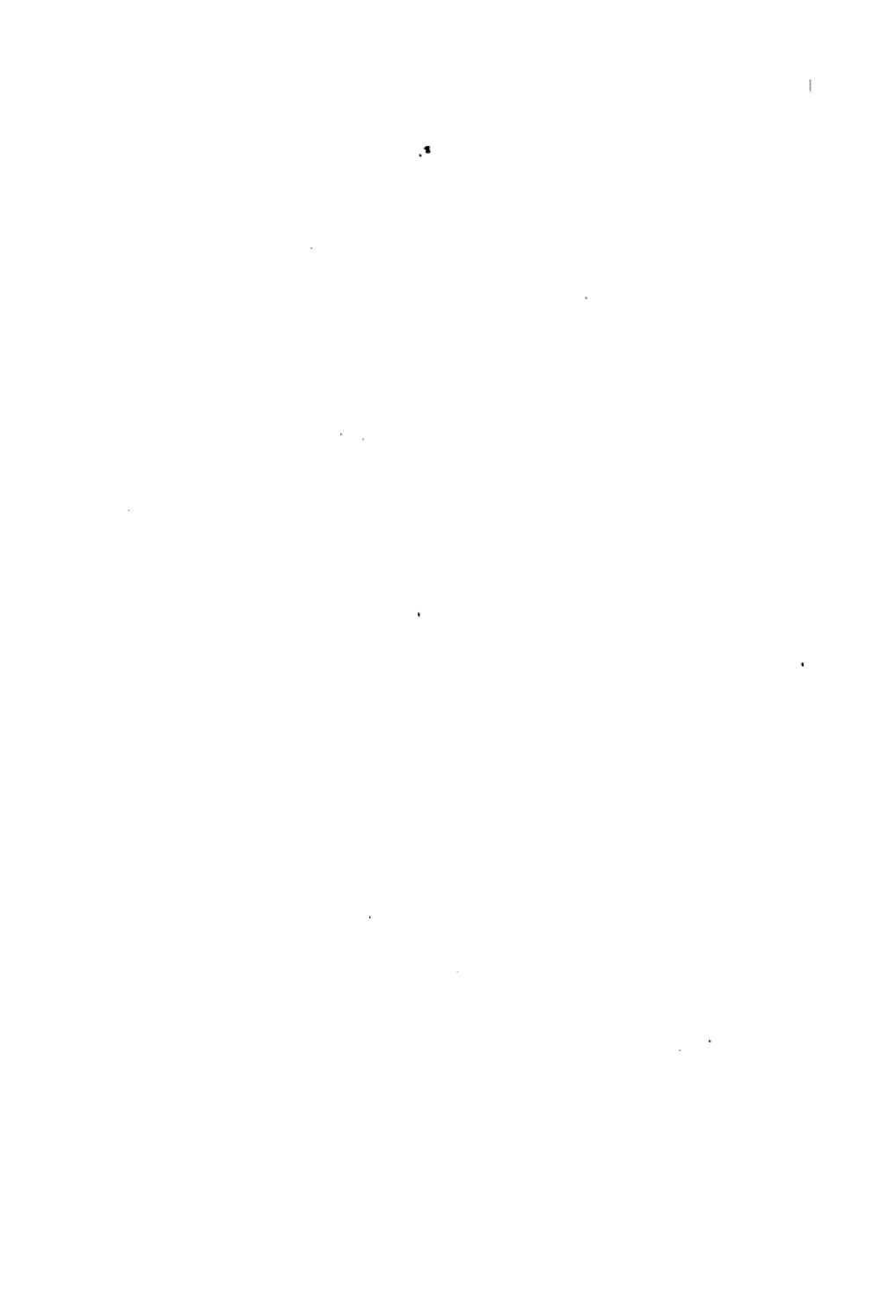
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TO
THE REV. WILLIAM NEVINS,
RECTOR OF MININGSBY, LINCOLNSHIRE,
THIS LITTLE WORK
IS
RESPECTFULLY, GRATEFULLY, AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED.

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PREFACE.

THAT many English children are lost to the Church of England after they leave school is a very common complaint. The chief reason appears to be that what are commonly called *Church principles* are scarcely at all known. Religious education is supposed to consist in imparting such a knowledge of Bible history as enables a child to answer such questions as "Who was Moses?" "Where was the Lord Jesus Christ born?" "Into what three territories was the land of Canaan divided when Christ came?" together with a knowledge of the chief moral precepts as things which must be practised. The ordinary English child knows nothing of what the Church is. The only idea which the word "church" brings to his mind is that of a peculiarly shaped and peculiarly fitted-up building, too often remarkable for its utter discomfort, and to which he is taken on Sunday for the purpose of hearing and reading a lot of dry stuff, enough to tire

out the patience of the best behaved, and where he must perforce keep as still as possible, until the wearisome performance is over. As he grows in years, he considers "the Church" to be a certain way of going on which (if it is followed faithfully) will probably, though not certainly, bring its followers to heaven when they die ; there being other ways to the same end, more convenient to some people (who are called Dissenters), and possibly better in themselves : the main difference between "the Church" and "Dissent" being that Church people allow the use of prayer-books and surplices, and have Bishops, and clergymen under the Bishops (the deacon being merely a clergyman in his apprenticeship, and who is restricted from doing one or two things for his first year),* while Dis-

* We once saw the Diaconal restrictions thus described in print :—Deacons "cannot read the Absolution, nor give the sacramental Bread." Now the forbidding a Deacon to read what in the daily office is called the "Absolution" is purely a matter of Church order : the form in question is not necessarily absolution at all, but may be merely a general declaration to the effect that God's pardon is vouchsafed to believing penitents, and coupled to a prayer ; and hence it is quite within the power of the Church of England to order (if she thinks proper) that it be read by Deacons, or even by laymen. And again, there is nothing in Anglican usage to hinder a Deacon from ministering the consecrated Bread as well as the Chalice, provided only that they were consecrated by a Bishop or Priest. The two things which a Deacon *cannot* do, and which *no power*

sentrers do not commonly use either the prayer-book or the surplice, and have all their ministers alike in degree.

Thus when the half-instructed youth is brought into contact with one or other of those humanly-formed congregations wherein the organisation makes itself felt as an active power, and which at first sight might seem like what in the New Testament are called churches, what religious principle he has will prompt him to join one of those same congregations, not knowing that the history of them entirely forbids their being termed "churches," in the New Testament sense of the word.* Or if his Protestant prejudices against lights, vestments, colours, incense, &c., are dispelled by his common sense, and he is brought face to face with that mighty body—we mean the Roman communion—which claims to be the Catholic Church itself, and which retains, though in a corrupted form, one apostolic rite

on earth can enable him to do, are—abolving, and offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

* The word "Church," when used to denote any particular congregation, invariably means, not any congregation which men may establish for themselves, but a congregation in fellowship with the one Catholic Church, and knit thereto by a share in Apostolic ministry. Such congregations as those now called "Dissenting"—congregations which had *separated* from the old Church in the following out of mere private judgment—*i.e.* self-conceit or self-will—were utterly unknown in New Testament times.

at least, which the Church of England in her self-sufficiency and unbelief has let slip—we mean the rite of Anointing the Sick,*—it is but natural that he should be carried away into Romanism. In fact, the reason why there are not more perversions to Dissent and Romanism is, we fear, not that Anglican Christians generally are aware of the hollowness of Dissenting and Romanist pretensions, but really because aristocratic pride keeps back in the one case, and Protestant prejudice in the other. In other words, what keeps people in the fold of the Church of England is not the strength of religious principle, but actually the weakness of it.

If it be desired to trace the mischief to its source, we shall find it to be largely caused by defective teaching. Many pious persons fear to dwell too much on what are called Church principles, lest the learners should come to “put the Church in the place of Christ,” as the saying is: not knowing that Church principles follow necessarily from the main articles of the Faith, and that to neglect those is to undermine these. Others, again, fear to engender a spirit of controversy in the young disciple, and on that account keep back from

* Which is as much for the present day as any other Christian rite is. If S. James v. 14, 15, was only for primitive times, there is not a precept or promise in the whole Bible which may not be similarly got rid of.

him many things which are unhappily a matter of controversy ; as though it were impossible to lay the foundations of truth in all their length and breadth without dwelling on the antagonism of error ; or as though the fact of a truth being controverted (what truth, by the way, has *not* been controverted ?) made it the less necessary to be held. And with some, perhaps, there is a fear of being thought extreme ; the fear of being identified with some particular party ; as if this were not a necessary part of the trials through which those who would be faithful to their trust, in these days of unbelief, must be content to go.

Then, too, it must not be forgotten that many are unable to teach Church principles ; yes, unable, through being ill instructed themselves even in those articles of the Creed which more especially may be termed fundamental. For thirty years of his own life, the present writer never heard the doctrine of the INCARNATION set forth from the pulpit ; he is inclined to question whether the doctrine is really taught in the majority of Anglican pulpits ; he has met with more than one educated person to whom the present reality of Christ's human nature was a new thing ; in one parish church he has heard positive Sabelianism taught ; over and over again, in Protestant publications, has he seen the Nestorian heresy—denial that the blessed Virgin was the mother of God—formally expressed. Ordinary

" Evangelical " teaching makes practically no account of the Pentecostal event ; many persons imagine that the Holy Ghost dwelt in God's people in old time just as He dwells in them now.* What wonder, then, that the result should be a plentiful crop of Protestant heresy ; a confounding between Regeneration and Conversion ; a disbelief of the truth that Sacraments are the ordinary means of establishing a connection between Christ and individual people : and hence, a general depreciation of Sacraments and everything of a sacramental nature, a practical rejection of the authorized priesthood as a priesthood, an isolation of self, as though no person had aught to do save to get the salvation of his own soul, and as though a person's getting to heaven were a matter resting entirely between himself and God, and in which no other person can interfere—the very idea of a Church, as set forth in the New Testament and in the Creeds, being thus, in fact, rejected : unless, indeed, where the palpable meaning of Scripture is too strong to be entirely ignored, and makes itself felt, in spite of a misleading education. But in how few can this be expected to take place !

What wonder, moreover, that the foundations of *faith* not being properly laid, some of the chief incentives to Christian *morality* should

* See *The Peep of Day*, and *Line upon Line*, *passim*.

be lost. The duty of *personal purity* is grounded by S. Paul upon the truth that our bodies are members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost.* The duty of *truthfulness*, on the truth that baptized people are members one of another.† The duty of *abstinence from sin generally*, on the truth that we have been baptized into Christ's Death, and so been made to have done with sin, because when Christ died *He had done with sin.*‡ But to ordinary Protestants, i.e., to the ordinary English Christian, all this has absolutely no meaning at all.§

In the present little volume, the Author offers to the notice of the public a humble attempt at remedying the evil in some small measure. In it he has attempted to teach (what is most certain) the identity of the Church in the present day with the Church of the Apostles, and of the ordinances now ministered by Catholic priests with those which are mentioned in the New Testament. In setting forth the realities with which, through God's grace, we are surrounded, he has endeavoured to give no uncertain sound. The Church herself, her infallibility,¶ the admis-

* 1 Cor. vi. 15-20.

+ Eph. iv. 25.

† Rom. vi. 1-13.

§ See this more fully dwelt upon in the Rev. M. F. Sadler's valuable little work, *The Second Adam and the New Birth.*

¶ Which does not by any means involve the personal infallibility of the chief of her Bishops, who is only *primus inter pares*, as was his Apostolic predecessor S.

sion to her membership by means of a baptism, wherein God the Holy Ghost works upon the outward element of water;* the presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharistic paten and chalice when a valid consecration has taken place; the sacrificial character of the Eucharistic service;† the conferring of the Holy Ghost in some measure by the laying on of hands; the validity of priestly absolution in the courts of heaven; are not the less realities because some people fail to understand them or refuse to believe them. Where, however, the matters treated of are matters not of faith but of mere opinion—matters whereon no sufficient authority has pronounced, and on which, therefore, every Christian may entertain whatever view commends itself to his reason—a too decided dogmatism has been, he trusts, avoided.

How far the author has succeeded in his design must be left to the test of experience. He hopes that his little work may be of some use both in Sunday Schools; (in which, ordinarily, it should be *read to the children*)

Peter.—The infallibility of the Church in the lump is a necessary inference from such texts as Matt. xviii. 18, 1 Tim. iii. 15, 1 John iv. 6, Isa. lix. 21. At least, if the Church in the lump should ever err, Christ will immediately come personally and visibly to indicate His truth.

* See p. 42, note (‡) † See p. 50, note (*)

‡ The writer would not be understood to express any approval of the principle of Sunday Schools; which

and in private families. Perhaps it may be well to suggest here, that, in reading it to children (as, generally, in reading *anything* to children, and more especially to those who are very young, or whose minds have had little exercise), the pronunciation should not be rapid; but while, at the same time, too great tardiness is avoided, sufficient time should be allowed for the little ones to take in each fresh idea as it is presented to them. Moreover, children will attend best when the words which suggested new ideas are pronounced with peculiar emphasis. Take, for instance (what the writer has seen somewhere adduced as an instance of this sort of thing, though he does not remember where) the narrative of S. Peter's deliverance from prison, and let it be read just as any other passage might be read—and then, for the contrast, let the teacher pronounce with peculiar emphasis

have, he believes, done some good, but vastly more harm. The divine ordinance for the teaching and general education of children is not the school-teacher, but the parent. And it is notorious that the general effect of Sunday Schools has been to make parents neglectful of their proper duties; and instead of stimulating them to the performance of those duties, and to qualifying themselves for their performance, to attempt shifting the responsibility to the shoulders of others. And probably this is one cause why the sacred ties of the family are in the present day so much disregarded. How much better it would be for parents to teach their children at home, and worship along with them at church!

those words which we give in italics:—
“Behold, the *angel of the Lord* came upon him, and a *light shined* in the prison, and he *smote* Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly; and his chains *fell off* from his hands.” The difference will be as striking in the attention paid, as in that manner of reading which excites it.

Reference has been made at the end of each Lesson to one or more Hymns, which may be committed to memory by those children who are old enough to understand them in some measure. The following are the abbreviations used—

I. & H.. Introits and Hymns, with some Anthems.
(Masters.)

H. A. & M. Hymns Ancient and Modern, with Appendix.
(Clowes and Sons.)

H. N. Hymnal Noted, with Appendix. (Palmer).

P. H. People's Hymnal. (Masters.)

The *questions* on each lesson should be asked either at the close of the same lesson, or just before the beginning of the next, or (which will probably be found best) at both times. Moreover, the intelligent teacher will know how to keep up the attention of the little Christians by a judicious intermixing of questions (not too many, however) as he goes on.

It is, the author trusts, needless to impress upon those who will use this book, the supreme importance of regulating their common life in a manner answerable to those truths which

they have undertaken to teach. The Catholic Faith was not given for our amusement, but for our salvation. And to teach his child that we partake of the Holy Ghost from the time of our Baptism, while we live as if the contrary were the case, or as though His Divine Influence were not meant to reach to every individual action of our ordinary walk, is more likely to encourage the child in unreality and hypocrisy than in anything good. Let the teacher therefore pray and strive constantly that the lessons which he gives to Christ's little ones may be reflected in his own life first; and this, without trying to set an example *for the sake* of setting an example. Let him remember what he reads in S. Matt. v. 19; vii. 21-23; Rom. ii. 19-23; 1 Cor ix. 27.

In conclusion, the writer has only to commend his little work to the Church's Divine HEAD, that its faults may be pardoned and over-ruled for good, and that it may generally be in His hands an instrument, though a very insignificant one, of promoting the edification of some of those little ones to whom more especially the kingdom of heaven belongs.

LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM.

LESSON I.

THE INCARNATION OF GOD THE SON.

My dear Children : You all know that in the one blessed God there are Three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; and you know that each of these is God, each of Them as old (so to say) as the Others, so that They were always living together from all eternity, and each of Them filling all heaven and earth.

From whom does the Father get His Being and Life ?—He gets them from Himself alone.

From whom does the Son get *His* Being and Life ?—He gets them from the Father.

And from whom does the Holy Ghost get *His*?—From the Father : but He is also the Spirit of the Son.

Yes : and thus it is that although each is God by Himself, yet all altogether They are not Three Gods, but One God. One Being of all, one Life in all.

How many of you can say the Belief, or the

Creed (as it is called) ? And when you have said it, and when I ask you what you *chiefly* learn in it, what will you answer me ?

"First, I learn to believe in God the Father, Who hath made me and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, Who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God."

What is the name which we commonly give to God the Son now?—We call Him Jesus Christ. But how is it that we can call Him so? The name "Jesus" is such a name as belongs to a man; it is the same as Joshua. He is "of one substance with the Father," and thus Himself also God over all, blessed for ever: How comes it that a man's name should be given to Him?

The reason is, that between one and two thousand years ago God the Son *became Man*. What is this year called?—Eighteen hundred and _____. Well, about so many years ago God the Son *became Man*.

How did He become man?—Why, there was a holy virgin named Mary. She lived in a town called Nazareth, and though poor, was descended from King David. She had never had any children of her own; but she was going to be married to a good man named Joseph, and she hoped that God would give her some children. And God did intend her to have a child, but He meant that child to be

His Own Son. So one day an angel came to her and spoke to her: "Hail, highly favoured one! The Lord is with you." Mary was alarmed when she saw the angel, and wondered what he could mean. But the angel went on to say, "Fear not, Mary; God is pleased with you, and means you to have a child which will be His own Son: and God will give Him a kingdom which shall last for ever."

The angel went on to tell her that God, and not Joseph, would be the Child's Father; and that God the Holy Ghost would make His Body for Him. And this God the Holy Ghost did. You know now what we mean when we say that God the Son was conceived by the Holy Ghost. We call it to mind on the day called Lady Day.

Now this is what is called the *Incarnation*. The Son of God became incarnate; that is, He took our flesh upon Him of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and joined it to Himself. And this is how He is able to be our Saviour. We had fallen away from God by sin, but He came and made Himself One with us; and thus He is able not only to put life and strength, and power and goodness, into us from Himself, but also to lift us up along with Himself out of our sins, and back to God.

In due time, as you know, He was born; God the Son in our nature, as we have in memory at Christmas. And we now call Him *the Lord Jesus Christ*. He is one Person, and

not more than one ; but in that One Person there are now two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man. You know, my dear children, how He lived and grew up just like one of us, except, indeed, as regards sin. He had no sinfulness in Him, and He never did any sin. He could not, because He is God the Son. Satan tempted Him sorely to do wrong, but He resisted Satan, and Satan was disappointed. Then you know how at last His enemies got hold of Him and crucified Him ; yes, crucified God the Son. It was necessary that God the Son should suffer and die, because He had made Himself one with us, and when He took our nature upon Him in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, He took all those sins also with which our nature was stained — all the sins with which we had stained it ;—and wherever sin is, there must be death. But when He had died, there was nothing more for him to suffer, and so He got forgiveness for all mankind. He died on Good Friday ; and on the third day from that —Easter Day—God brought Him back to life again; not to die any more ; His Body was lying in the grave, but God made it alive again, and so Christ *rose* from the dead.

But how about Christ's kingdom ? God meant His Son to have a kingdom ; how was that kingdom set up ? and how is it being carried on ? That, my dear children, you shall learn, I hope, out of this little book.

HYMNS.

The God Whom earth, and sea, and sky.
H. N. 88 ; H. A. & M. 249 ; P. H. 149.

O Love, how deep, how broad, how high.
H. N. 45 : H. A. & M. 143 ; P. H. 531.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

How many Persons are there in the One Godhead?
What are we taught to call Them?
Are They three Gods?
Is either of them older than another?
Does either of Them take up any space in Heaven
by Himself?
From whom does God the Father get His Being?—
From whom does God the Son get His?—From whom
does God the Holy Ghost get His?
Which Person is it that became Man?
Who was it that made His Body for Him?
Out of whose flesh did the Holy Ghost make it?
How long was that ago?
How many natures has Christ had from that time
forward?—What are they?
Had Christ any sinfulness in Him?
When He had been born, and was grown up, what
did His enemies do to Him?
What did God do to Him on the third day after
that?

LESSON II.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

You have heard, my dear children, how our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and died, and how He came to life again on Easter Day. His Soul had been with the souls of all the other dead people, but God brought it back again and joined it to Christ's Body, so that Christ's Body became all alive again, as It had been before.

And that was on Sunday morning. It was Easter Sunday—Easter Day—when Christ's Body came to life again. That was the happiest day that had ever been. When God brought the Israelites through the Red Sea, and saved them from the cruel Egyptians, that was a happy day. And when the Jews had come back from Babylon and were laying the foundations of the new temple, that also was a happy day. But far happier was the day on which the Lord Jesus Christ came to life again and rose from the dead. It was a most happy day for Him, and a most happy day for us. Do you not know a little hymn which begins—

“This is the day when Christ arose
So early from the dead”

and which has in it these lines also—

“ This is the day when Jesus broke
The powers of death and hell ? ”

What does the word “ hell ” mean in that place ? what does it mean when we say in the Creed, “ He descended into hell ? ” It means a place under the earth, where the souls of the dead people were being kept. There were many souls there, souls of God’s people who had died, and God allowed Satan to have some power over them,* though I do not know how much. So that they were longing for the promised Saviour to come and deliver them. At last God the Son did come down from heaven to our earth, and became man ; so that we now call Him the Lord Jesus Christ. And in due time He was crucified, and died, as I told you, and His soul passed into hell, that is, into the place where the souls of the dead were. But as He was God (you know that He always was God, and always will be God as well as man), I say, as He always was God, Satan could not hold Him in hell for one moment longer than He Himself chose : and thus it was that very early on Easter morning the soul of the Lord Jesus came back to His Body again. And thus it

* “ That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”—Heb. ii. 14, 15.

comes to pass that when He passed out of hell Himself, He made a way for His people also to pass out of it. And this is what we call *Redemption*. Have you not heard us sing in Church, " When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers "?

How long did the Lord stay upon the earth after He had come to life again ?—About forty days—nearly six weeks. Was He with His disciples all that time ?—No : He showed Himself to them indeed sometimes, that they might know Him to be really alive again ; thus you have heard how He showed Himself first to S. Mary Magdalene, then to S. Peter, the same evening to the two friends as they walked to Emmaus ; then to the Apostles ; afterwards to the Apostles again, and at another time to more than five hundred of His disciples at once. But He did not stay with them always.

At the end of the forty days the Lord Jesus showed Himself to them again. The Apostles were together in Jerusalem, and the Lord took them *out of* Jerusalem, and walked with them up to the top of a hill which was very near, and which was called the *Mount of Olives*.

The Lord and His disciples had often walked up that hill before ; and the disciples might often walk up it again. But they would not walk up it again with the Lord. He was

about to leave them, and go back to His Father in Heaven.

So when they reached the top of the hill, where the district of Bethany began, the Lord lifted up His hands and blessed the disciples. You have seen the Priest in church bless a whole congregation. What does he say? He says, "The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always." I do not know what words of blessing were said by the Lord Jesus; but whatever they were, while He was saying them He began to rise through the air up towards the sky.

You have heard how once the Lord had walked upon water. Now He rose up through the air. He did not fly like a bird, He rose up, as some of you may have seen a balloon rise up. Higher and higher He rose, until He passed quite away among the clouds, and the Apostles saw Him no more. He was gone, and they were left behind.

Where had He gone? He had gone into the highest heaven, right up to the very throne of God. And there He is now. Have you not been taught to say, "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty?" That going up of His into heaven is what we call *the Ascension*. I shall tell you another time *what He had gone up to do*.

HYMNS.

Jesu, Redemption all divine.—*H. N.* 67.
Jesu, our own Redemption blest.—*P. H.* 143.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

On what day of the week did the Lord come to life again?

Where had the Lord's soul been before it was joined again to His Body on that day?

Who had the chief power in that place?

How long did the Lord stay on the earth after He rose from the dead?

Where did He go at the end of that time?

Who saw Him go?

What was He doing when He began to go?

LESSON III.**WHAT CHRIST IS DOING NOW.**

WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, what did He mean to do there? This, my dear children, is what I am going to explain to you now.

Have any of you heard me read in a book how God taught Moses to make the Tabernacle? What was the Tabernacle? It was a great tent, with boards, and bars, and ropes, and curtains, and pillars; and in it God chose

to dwell. Inside the Tabernacle there hung a thick curtain called the vail : it hung all across, and divided the Tabernacle into two rooms, an outer and an inner. The outer of these rooms was the largest—it was twice as large as the inner room—and there were in it several very beautiful and costly things. There was a great candlestick with seven lamps upon it —this was all of pure gold ; there was a table made of wood and covered over with gold ; and at the upper end of this room, right in front of the vail, there was a little altar, also of wood, and covered over with gold—this was for burning a mixture of sweet gums, which was called incense. Should you not have liked to see them all ? But now, what was there in the little room *inside* the vail ? This little room was called the Holy of holies ; what was there in it ? There was a box or chest, made of wood, and covered over with gold ; inside this box were the two tablets of stone which Moses had made, and on which God had written the Ten Commandments. And on the cover of the box there were two figures with wings, fixed with their faces looking towards the middle of the cover. These figures were called *cherubs* or *cherubim*, the box was called *the ark*, and the cover was called the *mercy-seat*. There was nothing else in the Holy of holies ; no table, no altar, no candlestick—nothing but the ark and the things inside it.

Would you not think that it would be dark there? for there were no windows and no lamps, and there was the thick curtain shutting out all the light of the sun. But I have not told you what used to lighten it sometimes, and (for aught I know) always. On the top of the ark, on the mercy-seat, between the two cherubim, there used to shine something much more bright than all the seven lamps outside—yes, something more bright than even the sun. What was that, do you think? It was *the glory of God*. God had said to Moses, “I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.”*

Were all the people allowed to come into the tabernacle, and see the lamps, and watch the priests as they trimmed them, and see them burn the sweet-smelling incense upon the little altar, and see them set twelve cakes of fine white bread every week upon the table? No: only the priests were allowed to go into the Tabernacle at all. Were the priests, then, allowed to go into the inner room, the Holy of holies? Not the common priests—only the High Priest; and even he might not go in whenever he liked, but only on one day in the year, the great Day of Atonement, which fell in the month of September.

Now I want to tell you what the High Priest used to do on that same great day.

* Lev. xvi. 2.

First he used to kill a bullock, and offer it on the great brass altar, in the court or yard outside ; next he used to take in his left hand a *censer*, which was, I suppose, something like a fire-shovel with a short handle,* and in the censer he used to take some burning embers from off the altar ; and in his right hand he used to take a quantity of sweet incense, and with these things he passed under the vail into the innermost room, or Holy of holies. Then he set down the censer on the ground, right before the ark, and threw on the incense, whereupon there immediately went up a most fragrant smoke. He next went out into the court, and took a silver basin with some of the bullock's blood in it ; this also he brought inside the vail, and sprinkled some of the blood on the front of the mercy-seat and some more of it on the ground before the ark. Then he went out and killed a goat, and did the same with the goat's blood. That was his way of presenting the blood before God,—and when he did so, God promised that both the High Priest himself, and the other priests, and all the people, should be forgiven for all their sins.

This, I say, is what the Jewish High Priest used to do every year on the great Day of Atonement. And the work which our Lord

* See an engraving of an ancient Egyptian censer in Kitto's Pictorial Bible, Exod. xxviii. 6. Compare Numb. xvi. 38.

Jesus Christ is doing now in heaven is of the same kind. Just as the bullock and the goat were offered at the altar, so Christ was offered upon the Cross. Do any of you know the hymn which has in it—

“Upon the altar of the Cross
His Body hath redeem'd our loss!”

Christ did not kill Himself—but He gave Himself to be put to death, and that was His offering of Himself, which He began in the supper-room the night before, when He said, “This is My Body, which is given for you.” And as the High Priest went into the Holy of holies to appear before God with the blood of the bullock and the goat, so now Christ is gone into heaven to appear before God with His own Blood, far more precious than any other blood in the whole world. This is the way in which Christ pleads for us. This work which Christ is doing is called Christ's *Intercession*. We say that Christ intercedes for us; and this is one reason why God hears our prayers, because they go up to God along with Christ's Intercession. I shall tell you another time how, when Christ had begun to intercede, He got, for Himself with His disciples, the Holy Ghost.

HYMN.

Where high the heavenly temple stands.
P. H. 584; H. A. & M. 151; I. & H. 139.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What was the Tabernacle?

Into how many rooms was the Tabernacle divided?

What was there which parted between the rooms?

Tell me some things which were in the outer room.

—In the inner room.

How was the outer room lighted?

How was the inner room lighted?

Who were allowed to go into the outer room? Into the inner room? How often?

When the High Priest was to go into the inner room, what animals were killed, in sacrifice, in the court outside?

What were the first things which the High Priest took with him into the Holy of holies?

What else did he take in?

Who is our High Priest?

What is that work called which He is doing now for us?

LESSON IV.

S. MATTHIAS.

WHAT did the Apostles do when they had seen the Lord go into heaven? They stood for some little time gazing up after Him; and while they were gazing, they were aware of some persons standing with them who had not been with them before—they looked and saw two men in bright garments. Who were they? They must have been angels. They spoke to

the disciples and said, "Why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, Which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

The Lord Jesus had often told them that He would come again. Now, a little while before He was crucified, He had talked to them about His coming, and told them that while He was away they would have work to do for Him. So now, I suppose, they remembered His words. He had also bidden them wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost came down upon them; so now they understood that they were to go back to the city and prepare for beginning their work. But there was one thing which they did first, and what do you think that was? It was to worship their Lord and Master Who had just gone away from them. They knew now that He was God over all, blessed for ever; they knew that He could see them and hear them, though He was ever so far away; and so they all knelt down and worshipped Him, bowing their heads down to the ground. Then they got up, and went down the hill, and into the city of Jerusalem again.

The eleven Apostles were living together in one house. There was a large room upstairs, and there they used to sit together and take their meals. And they used to pray together a great deal; and there were some other holy

people who used to pray with them—there was the blessed Virgin Mary, and S. Mary Magdalene, and other holy women besides, who had loved the Lord Jesus and followed Him.

How many Apostles did I say? Eleven. How many had there been at first? Twelve. Who was the twelfth? Judas: he had betrayed the Lord, and then gone and hanged himself, so that there was now one Apostle less than the Lord meant to have. The Lord had meant to have twelve Apostles, but now there were only eleven. You shall hear what was done to make up the number.

Who was the chief of the Apostles? S. Peter. The Lord had said to him, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock* I will build My Church;”† and He had said at another time, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”† So now S. Peter stood up, and gave his brother-Apostles some advice. He said, “You remember how Judas came to his end, and what a shocking end it was. God had foretold this in the Book of Psalms, and God had foretold also how another person would have to take Judas’s place. So now we must see what men there are who kept company with the Lord Jesus from the time that John was baptizing until the day that the Lord

* The word *Petros* in Greek, as *Kephas* in Aramaic, means “a rock” as well as “a stone.”—See Liddell and Scott’s Lexicon.

† Matt. xvi. 18.

† Luke xxii. 32.

ascended into heaven ; and one of these men will have to be made an Apostle along with us instead of Judas."

So the disciples did as S. Peter said ; and when they had made inquiry they found two men who had been with the Lord Jesus continually. One was named Joseph Barsabas, and the other was named Matthias. Which of these would be Apostle instead of Judas ? The Apostles did not know—they could not themselves make any one an Apostle, for the Lord had never given them any authority so to do. Who was it that had made *them* Apostles ? It was the Lord : and so they had no doubt but the Lord would make an Apostle now. How would the Lord let His disciples know which He would have for Apostle ? There was a way which God does not like His people to use now, but which He allowed His people to use then—and that was, casting lots. So the Apostles prepared to cast lots between these two men, Joseph Barsabas and Matthias. But first they prayed to the Lord Jesus ; they said, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two Thou hast chosen." Then they cast the lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias ; so they felt sure that Matthias was the one whom the Lord would have for His new Apostle, and they counted Matthias's name along with their own.

Then they betook themselves to praying

again; and they kept on praying, I dare say, for a good part of every day, until that day came which was called the DAY OF PENTECOST.

HYMN.

(*When a See or a Parish is vacant.*)

Eternal Shepherd, God most high.—P. H. 325.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What did the Apostles do immediately after they had seen the Lord ascend into Heaven, and before they went down the hill?

When they went down the hill, where did they go?

How did they pass their time for the next few days?

Who was the chief Apostle? What did he advise his brother-Apostles to do?

Who was to be Apostle instead of Judas? How did the Apostles find this out?

Could the eleven Apostles make him an Apostle?

LESSON V.

HOW THE HOLY GHOST CAME DOWN.

I TOLD you that from the time that the Lord Jesus went up into heaven until that day came which was called the Day of Pentecost, the Apostles and other holy people kept on

praying, and I dare say for a good part of each day.

How many Apostles were there now?—There were twelve, as there had been at first: only Judas had killed himself, and his place had been taken by Matthias; or, as we will now call him, *Saint Matthias*.

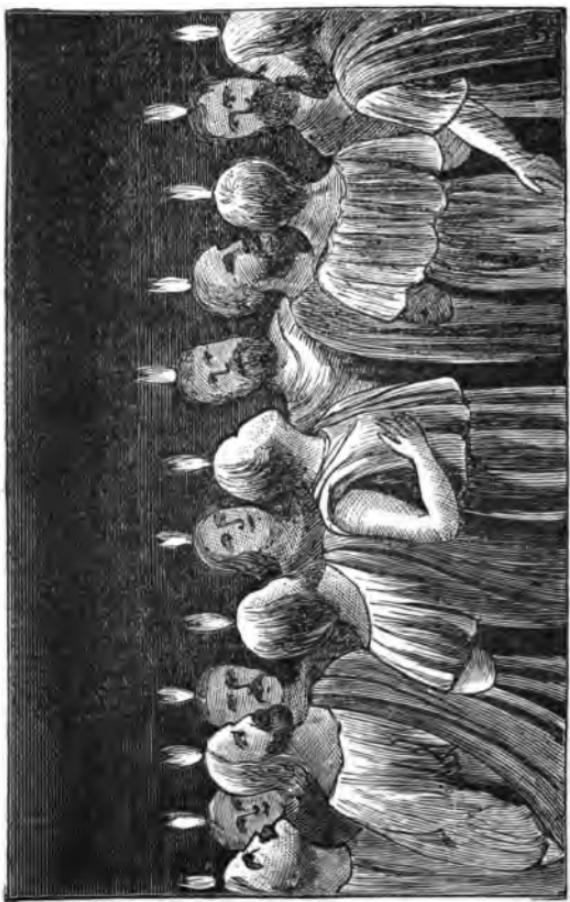
What was the Day of Pentecost?—You have heard about the Feast of the Passover, which the Jews kept in memory of their having been brought out of Egypt: now the Day of Pentecost was the first day of another feast, which was kept in memory of God's giving them the Law from Mount Sinai. The Passover fell in the spring; the Feast of Pentecost fell fifty days later; and was sometimes called the Feast of Weeks.

Well, when the day of Pentecost came, all the Apostles, and S. Matthias among them, were together, as they had been wont to be for the last ten days,—that is, since their Master had left them. I suppose they expected what was going to happen, for the Lord had said to them, before He went, “ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence,”—and now it was ten days since He had gone. But at any rate they were all together: and it was nine o'clock in the morning, one of the hours when the Jews were wont to pray. All at once there came a sound like that of a rushing mighty wind. It seemed to come, not from the east, or from the west, or from



To face 1, v.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY HOST.



the north, or from the south, but straight down from the sky. It seemed as if a great wind had rushed down into the place where the Apostles were, and filled all the house,—but yet there was no *feeling* of wind: nothing was blown about, only there was the sound of a great rushing.

At the same time there was a very wonderful appearance. It seemed as though a number of fiery flames came and sat, one on the head of each Apostle. And as each form of flame appeared, it became cloven in two. Each Apostle had one come and rest upon him, and yet no one was at all burnt. And while this was being done, the same moment there was a third thing, as wonderful if not more so: the Apostles began to speak in tongues which they had never learned. You know that in different countries people talk in different ways: the people in France, for instance, do not talk as we do, and if you do not learn the French tongue, you will not be able to understand what the French people say. Now the Apostles did not know more than one or two tongues; but now they were able to speak in tongues which five minutes before they had not known at all. One began to speak in the Parthian tongue; another in the Median tongue; another in the Elamite or Persian tongue, and so on. Then the Apostles knew what had happened to them; they knew that their Master had fulfilled His promise,—they

knew that He had got the Holy Ghost for them, and that the Holy Ghost Himself was now come to dwell in them, and to be with them for ever, as the Lord had said.

How could the Holy Ghost dwell in all the Apostles at once?—Because He is God; and God is everywhere at once. The Holy Ghost is just as much God as the Father is, or the Son. He is the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity.

The Apostles would now be able to do a great many things which they could not have done before; because the Holy Ghost is Almighty, and can do all things. And they would have Him to make them good, and helping them to do the work which Christ had given them to do.

You will remember these things, my dear children, I hope, the next time that Whitsun Day comes round. We keep Whitsun Day in memory of the Holy Ghost's coming down. Whitsuntide is our *Christian Pentecost*.

HYMN.

Above the starry spheres.

H. A. & M. 129; I. & H. 66.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

In memory of what did the Jews keep the Feast of Pentecost?

When the Apostles were together on the day of Pen-

tecost, what sort of a sound did they hear?—What appearance did they see?—What happened to them?

About what time of day was this?

What wonderful thing did the Apostles begin to do?

How could the Holy Ghost dwell in all the disciples at once?

What would the Holy Ghost help them to be?

What would He help them to do?

LESSON VI.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

You have heard, my dear children, how God the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost: how there was a noise like the noise of a great wind, and how there was an appearance like the appearance of fiery flames, and how it came and sat upon each of the Apostles, and how they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. You have heard, too, how, as soon as the Apostles had received the Holy Ghost into their hearts, they began to speak in tongues which they had never learned. Now you must know that the rushing noise was heard, not only by the Apostles in the place where they were gathered together, but by many people also gathered outside: for Jerusalem was full of people, and the time of day was one at which many of them would have been moving about. So

when the people heard the sound, and noticed into what place it seemed to enter, they came about that place to see what had happened ; and then they heard the Apostles speaking in the several tongues whereof I told you. And it made them wonder very much ; for, although these people were at Jerusalem now, they did not *live* at Jerusalem, their homes were in other countries, and now they heard the Apostles speaking in the tongues of those same countries, so that they understood what the Apostles were saying, and they could not make out how the Apostles were able to speak in those tongues which they had never learned. So one said to another, "What does it all mean ?" and some, I am sorry to say, said, "These men are tipsy ; they have drunk too much wine."

S. Peter and the other Apostles heard what these people were saying ; and they all stood up, and S. Peter began to speak. He spoke, I suppose, in the Greek tongue, which they all understood. He said, "Men and brethren, we are not drunk, for it is only just nine o'clock, when nobody ever thinks of drinking wine ; but God has been pouring out His Spirit. He said a long time ago that He would pour Him out, and now He has begun to keep His word. Listen now," S. Peter went on to say—"Listen now to what I am going to tell you. That Jesus, Whom you nailed to a cross, Who had done so many

good and wonderful works ; that same Jesus, I say, Whom you nailed to a cross, God has raised from the dead, and taken up to heaven. He is now sitting at God's right hand, and God gave Him what He asked, the gift of the Holy Ghost to give to us ; and He *has now given* that same Holy Ghost to us : and by this you may all know that that same Jesus, Whom you crucified, is your Saviour and your Lord, and that God will have you to be saved by Him, and by Him alone."

All this S. Peter said, and much more to the same purpose. When he had done speaking, many of the people were very much frightened. They knew that what S. Peter said was quite true—they were afraid that God was angry with them, and they wanted to know what they must do in order to have their sins forgiven them. So they said to S. Peter, and to the other Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do ?"

Then S. Peter said, " You must repent of your sins, and you must be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus ; then your sins will be forgiven you, and the Lord Jesus Christ will count you as His disciples."

Why did S. Peter say this ? Because a little while before the Lord had gone up into heaven, He had said to His Apostles, " You must go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Would the people let the Apostles baptize them? Yes, they were not afraid of being laughed at. They did not say, "These Apostles are no better than ourselves—a month ago they were no better than plain fishermen—we can get to heaven by ourselves very well without them." No, they were glad to let the Apostles baptize them. So the Apostles took them to places where there was water, and they put each person down into the water (or, if there was not much water, they poured water upon him), and as they did so to each one they said these words, or something like them: "You are baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

This was the first Christian baptism. As the water was poured upon each person, God forgave that person his sins,* and he became God's child.† And the Holy Ghost was working upon the water and with the water,‡ so that thenceforward each person would have the Holy Ghost about him; and I have no doubt but the Holy Ghost would come into each person's hearts and dwell there, so that

* So Ananias said afterwards to Paul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.—Acts xxii. 16; see also Eph. v. 26.

† "The washing (literally, *laver*) of regeneration," etc.—Titus, iii. 5.

‡ This is the meaning of 1 Cor. xii. 18, literally rendered, "*In one Spirit* were we all baptized into one body."

they would have Him in the same way as the Apostles had Him.

HYMN.

Now Jesus lifts His prayer on high.
I. & H. 40; H. N. 135.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

When the noise like the noise of a wind was heard, did any people hear it besides the Apostles ?

From whence did these people come ?

Tell me some things which they said about the Apostles, when they heard them speak in new tongues.

Who spoke to them then ?

Did the people then trouble themselves about what they heard ?

What did S. Peter advise them to do ?

What did he say would happen to them if they took his advice ?

Did any of the people do as he advised them ?

LESSON VII.

INCREASE OF THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

How many people did the Apostles baptize on the great Day of Pentecost ?—Three thousand ; more than would fill a very large Church.

The Feast of Pentecost lasted a week ;

when it was over, most of the people returned to their homes in the countries from which they had severally come. Those who lived in Parthia, went back to Parthia; those who lived in Media, went back to Media; those who lived in Egypt, went back to Egypt, and so on. I do not know how many remained in Jerusalem; but I suppose only a few hundred. When S. Matthias had been made an Apostle, there were only about a hundred and twenty of Christ's disciples in Jerusalem. I shall now, however, tell you how their number came to be increased.

You have heard of the Great Temple which was at Jerusalem. It had many gates; and one of these gates was called "the Beautiful Gate." Now there was a poor cripple, who had never been able to walk from the very time that he was born. The friends of this poor man used to bring him every day and lay him down by the Beautiful Gate, that those who felt inclined to give him any money might do so. And one day when S. Peter and S. John were going into the Temple at about three o'clock in the afternoon, this poor man asked them to give him something.

Had S. Peter or S. John anything to give him? S. Peter and S. John were both of them poor; but there was something which they could give, and which was better than money; and what was that?—Healing: S. Peter and S. John could make the man sound

and well. For when the Holy Ghost had come down upon them, He had put within them some of the same power which was in the Lord ; and you know how the Lord made blind people able to see, deaf people able to hear, and lame people able to walk. And the Lord had said that when the Holy Ghost came down on His disciples, the disciples would be able to do the same sort of things which He Himself had done.*

Would S. Peter and S. John make the man well ? Yes, if it were God's Will that they should ; for S. Peter and S. John had to please God, and not themselves. They soon knew, however, that God would have the poor man healed, and they knew that God would heal him by means of them. So they stopped, and looked at the poor man very hard ; and at the same time they said to him, "Look at us." The poor man did as he was bid ; he thought the Apostles were going to give him some money. S. Peter, however, did what was better ; he said, "Silver and gold have I none, but I give you what I can : in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." At the same time S. Peter gave him his right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle-bones became strong ; so that he was able not only to stand, but also to walk and jump about ; and he immediately

* John xiv. 12 ; Acts i. 8.

walked to the Temple with S. Peter and S. John, leaping as he walked, for joy that he was able to do so much.

Why did he go into the Temple?—To thank God for having made him strong; for it was the power of Christ who had made him strong, and the power of Christ is the power of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

All the people were very much astonished at what S. Peter and S. John had done. But S. Peter spoke to them, and told them how it was. “It was not,” said he, “by our own power or holiness, it was by the power of that same Jesus Whom you crucified, but Whom God brought to life again. And as Jesus has so great power, that shows Him to be the One Whom God means to be your Saviour. Repent therefore of your sins, and turn to Him.”

Would the people repent of their sins and turn to the Lord? Some did; more than had turned to the Lord on the Day of Pentecost. So now instead of a few hundred Christians at Jerusalem, there were about five thousand.* Was not that a happy thing? In the next Lesson I shall tell you how they all lived.

HYMN.

Let every heart exulting beat.
H. N. 181: II. A. & M. 194; I. & H. 143.

* Acts iv. 4, literally rendered, is, “. . . . the number of the men became about five thousand.”

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

When S. Peter had preached to the people on the Day of Pentecost, how many did as he advised them ?
Tell me about how many Christians there were at Jerusalem when the greater number had gone home.
Tell me the name of one of the gates of the Temple.
Who used to lie there ?
Why did he lie there ?
Who healed him ?
How did he heal him ?
When S. Peter spoke to the people afterwards, did any of them turn to Christ ?
How many Christians were there in Jerusalem then ?

LESSON VIII.

PRAYER AND COMMUNION.

How many followers had the Lord Jesus in Jerusalem at the time whereof I read to you last ? About five thousand men, besides women and children.*

These, together with the disciples in other places, made up the Lord's *Kingdom*. He was a King, and they were His subjects. What are subjects ? Those people who are under a king. The Lord Jesus had more than five thousand subjects. That was not a

* This is implied in the Greek word used by S. Luke, Acts iv. 4.

very large number for Him to have ; but the number became larger and larger continually, as more people were led to believe in Him, and to be baptized along with their families. These people made up the Church, and the Church was Christ's Kingdom.

Now in every kingdom there are rulers and magistrates to govern or rule under the king. And, as in other kingdoms, so Christ would have it in *His* kingdom. Who were the rulers in the Lord's kingdom ? The Apostles : the Lord had appointed them to be so.* And those who loved the Lord were glad to obey those whom Christ had appointed. They did not say, "The Apostles are no better than we,—we are all of us holy people, and we have just as much right to manage things as the Apostles have;" no, they chose rather to submit themselves, and to set their own likings and judgments aside. Some of them had heard the Lord say, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself?"† and they knew that it was both wise and right to do as the Lord told them.

Along with the Apostles there was another order of rulers called *Elders*. It was their business to help the Apostles in managing the

* "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you." (S. Matt. xx. 25, 26.) This evidently implies that though they were not to be *tyrants*, the Lord would make them *princes*.

† S. Luke ix. 23.

several congregations or companies of disciples ; they had to teach them, and tell them what to do, and how to serve God as Christians should.

What is a congregation ? A number of people who meet together from time to time for the purpose of worshipping God. There must have been several congregations of Christians at Jerusalem, for there were many more Christians than could meet in one place. They used, indeed, to go to the Temple, and pray to God there ; but they could not pray there to Christ, for the greater number of the Jewish priests not only did not believe in Christ themselves, but tried to prevent others also from believing in Him.

There was another reason why the Christians could not do in the Temple all which they would like to have done. There was a particular way of worshipping God which the Lord had bidden them practise, and which He had not made known to any one else. Do you remember how when the Lord Jesus was eating His last supper with the Apostles, before He was crucified, He had taken bread, and blessed it, and said, " This is My Body ?" and how He had taken a cup of wine (or wine and water), and said, " This is my Blood ?" There was another thing which the Lord had said at the same time. When He had had the Bread in His hands, He had said, " Do This in remembrance of Me," and when He

had had the Cup in His hands, He had said, "Do This, as oft as ye drink It, in remembrance of Me." What did He mean by "*doing*" the Bread and the Cup? He meant that they were to *offer those things to God*.* That then was to be their Christian offering or sacrifice; a table would be their altar, and the Bread and Wine which Christ had called His Body and His Blood would be instead of a lamb; and they would thus be showing forth Christ's Death.† So the disciples used to meet together very often to do this; they first ate a solemn meal together, rich and poor sitting down at the same table, and then one of the Apostles or elders would take some of the bread and some of the wine, (or wine and water,)‡ and bless them and offer them to God, and then give them to the people all round, and tell them that the Bread was

* "To do, in the language of the Jews, often meant 'to offer'; and it is obvious that this is the only sense in which it would be possible to speak of '*doing*' *a cup*. (See 1 Cor. xi. 25.) And note, that as this must be the meaning there, the same will be the meaning in verse 24. And this is the sense in which the Catholic Church has always understood her Lord's words. Moreover, had Christ meant "Perform this rite," He would have said not "Do this," but "Do *thus*."

† 1 Cor. xi. 26.

‡ All branches of the Church except the Armenian, (and latterly the English,) have been accustomed to use, in the Holy Eucharist, wine mixed with water, as the ancient Jews commonly used at their feasts



"THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD : OFFER THIS, AS OFT AS YE DRINK IT,
FOR COMMEMORATION OF ME." To face p. 5c.

Christ's Body and the Cup Christ's Blood.* This was called "the Lord's Supper," and sometimes, "the breaking of bread."

And this, my dear children, is what has always been done in the company of Christ's people. We meet together from time to time in the Church to pray, and to offer our Christian sacrifice as Christ our Master commanded us. And we have elders to bless the bread and wine, and to teach us and to train us just as those first disciples had of whom I am telling you. We call them *Priests*—the word "Priest" means "elder." When the Apostles began to die off, they appointed Bishops, and the Bishops in their turn appointed Elders or Priests, as I shall tell you by-and-by. And thus it is that the company of Christ's people has spread into so many countries of the world. The congregations which meet in our churches are branches of that same company of people about which I have been telling you—the same company which was gathered under the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem. That company of people is called the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and the congregation which meets in our Church is a branch of it, and you and I are members of it.

We were made members of it when we were

* The common form of administration in early times appears to have been simply, "The Body of Christ"—"The Blood of Christ." To which each person answered *Amen.*

baptized. Should you not, my dear children, thank God for this ?

HYMNS.

O Lord, how joyful 'tis to see.

H. N. 304; H. A. & M. 188; I. & H. 81.

Now, my tongue, the mystery telling.

H. A. & M. 203.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Of what was Christ's kingdom made up ?

Who were the chief rulers in it under Him ?

What were the under-rulers called ?

Where used the Christians to pray ?

What used they to do, which they could not do in the Temple ?

What name do we now give to the company of Christian people ?

When were we made members of it ?

LESSON IX.

THE FIRST DEACONS.

I HAVE told you, my dear children, about two ranks or orders of rulers by whom Christ's subjects were governed at first. I have told you about *Apostles*, and also about *Elders* or *Priests*. To-day I shall tell you about a *third* order, or rank of ministers, who were appointed soon after, in order that they might help the

Apostles and Elders by doing some necessary works.

Now from what I have already told you, you will have learnt that the first Christians were very charitable. You have heard how the rich and the poor used to sit down from time to time at a solemn meal all together. Besides this, there was some food or money given away every day to those people who needed help ; and they were all honest—none tried to take advantage of another, none pretended to be worse off than he really was ; each trusted his neighbour, for each endeavoured to deserve that his neighbour should trust him.

But where did the Apostles get the money to distribute ? There were some rich people among the followers of Christ, and these sold their houses and lands and brought the money to the Apostles. There was one good man in particular who did this—his name was Barnabas. Barnabas had some land ; he sold it and gave the money to the Apostles. Barnabas and the other rich people were not *obliged* to do this ; but when they did it, that showed how much they loved their Master and King, the Lord Jesus Christ ; and the Lord Jesus Christ was pleased with them.

This is how the Apostles got money to distribute to the poorer Christians. But as time went on it so fell out that some of the widows did not get cared for as much as some other

widows did. Most of the widows belonged to Jerusalem (where they all lived), and talked Hebrew; but some belonged to other countries, and talked Greek; and these last came to be overlooked, and so lost their share of the gifts, and their friends made complaint about it to the Apostles.

The Apostles were very sorry that any of Christ's followers should be neglected. They determined to do what they could in order that the poor widows might be neglected no more. So they called the disciples together, and said to them, "If we attend to the relief of all the poor widows, we shall have to stop preaching—for we cannot do both things at once. Therefore, brethren, choose out from among you seven men whom you know to be good and trustworthy, and bring them to us, and then we will appoint them over the work of relieving the poor widows."

The disciples were much pleased with this plan; and they chose out from among themselves seven men accordingly as the Apostles had desired them. I will not tell you all their names now; but one of the men was named *Stephen* and another was named *Philip*. This was not S. Philip the Apostle, but another Philip.

Would Stephen and Philip and the others set about managing the relief as soon as the people had chosen them? No; they waited till they had been appointed by the Apostles.

How would the Apostles appoint them ? They would pray over them, and lay their hands upon their heads ; and then God would give them some fresh spiritual power, and that would enable them to do well that work which they were undertaking.

So the seven men were presented to the Apostles, and the Apostles prayed over them and laid their hands upon their heads. That was called *ordaining* them. And when the seven men had been ordained, the Apostles were able to give up more time to preaching and teaching ; and it pleased God to give them such success that a great many more people became followers of the Lord Jesus, and joined themselves to the company of His Church.

The seven men of whom I have nowt old you were afterwards called *Deacons*. We have some Deacons amongst us. A man is always with us made a Deacon before he is made a Priest.

HYMN.

The earth, O Lord, is one wide field.—*H. A. & M.* 218.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

How were the poor Christians at Jerusalem relieved ?

Where did the Apostles get money for relieving them ?

Tell me the name of one man in particular who was very charitable ?

Were all the widows cared for alike?

Who were neglected?

What did the Apostles ask the people to do for the purpose of setting things right?

Tell me the names of two persons whom the people chose.

What were the seven men to do?

Did they begin doing this as soon as they were chosen?

What did the Apostles do to them first?

What was that called?

What were the seven men afterwards called?

LESSON X.

S. STEPHEN.

THERE were now *three* orders of rulers in Christ's kingdom. There were, first, the Apostles, secondly the Elders, and thirdly the Deacons.

When S. Stephen and his six fellows had been ordained by the Apostles, they set about the work which they had been appointed to do, the work of managing the relief of the poorer Christians. They looked after the widows, and saw that each widow had her fair share of what was to be given away. But there was another sort of work which they did, and a more noble sort of work. What do you think that was? Preaching and teaching: telling people about God and Christ.

S. Stephen and the other Deacons did not preach as much as the Apostles did ; yet they did preach sometimes. When they were ordained there was given them some special grace of God's Holy Spirit ; and they knew that if they used this grace diligently, God would enlarge it ; and this made them anxious to do as much for God as they could, in whatever way God allowed them. They knew, too, that they were appointed to assist the Apostles and Elders ; and although they could not bless the bread and wine in the Christian Sacrifice, so as to make them Christ's Body and Blood, and although they could not bring the Holy Ghost upon people by praying and laying their hands upon people's heads, yet they might teach people about the Lord ; and those, therefore, among them whom God enabled to do this work did it very gladly. S. Stephen was one of these, and S. Philip was another. And there was another sort of work besides which God enabled S. Stephen to do ; I mean the work of doing wonderful things—miracles. I cannot tell you *what* were the wonderful things which S. Stephen did ; but I know that God enabled him to do some.

Now you must know that among the people who heard S. Stephen speaking about the Lord Jesus, there were some Jews who came from Cyrene, some who came from Cilicia, and some who came from a country which was then called Asia. These Jews, along with some

others, had a synagogue to themselves ; and when S. Stephen spoke about the Lord Jesus (I do not know whether he was speaking in the synagogue *then*, or not) some of them rose up and said, “ What you say is not true.” Thereupon S. Stephen tried to make them see that what he taught *was* true ; but these Jews did not care for what he said ; and so after disputing with him till they could dispute no longer, they determined to silence him in another way. They tried to get him put to death. So they began by stirring up the other Jews, and setting them also against S. Stephen ; and then they got hold of him and brought him before the Jewish Council—the same Council before which the Lord had stood, and afterwards the Apostles.

What was the Council ?—It was an assembly of about seventy men, the chief of whom was the High Priest ; and when any Jew was said to have spoken any bad words against God, he was brought before the Council and tried, just as people who are charged with crimes now, and brought before a judge and jury.

So into the presence of this Council the wicked Jews brought S. Stephen. The High Priest was in his place, and S. Stephen was set before him—I dare say in the very same place where the Lord had stood when judgment was going against *Him*. Then there stood up wicked men, liars, who said, “ This fellow is always speaking bad words against the Temple

and the Law." What was the Temple?—It was God's House. And what was the Law?—It was the set of commandments which God had given to His people several hundreds of years before. You know, my dear children, a part of that law, for you know the Ten Commandments; and the Ten Commandments are the chief part of it.

Had S. Stephen been speaking against the Temple? No, surely. He would not have spoken against the House of God, in which he was wont to pray. And had he been speaking against the Law? Surely not; for S. Stephen loved God, and he could not then have spoken against God's commandments. Those wicked men were telling lies about him. They were bearing false witness against their neighbour. At the very time when they were saying that S. Stephen had been speaking against God's Law, they were breaking a commandment of the same law themselves. Which commandment?—The ninth. Those wicked men wanted to get S. Stephen put to death, and they did not care what wickedness they did if they could only compass their evil purpose.

What do you think S. Stephen did when these men told such wicked lies about him? Did he go into a passion and call them bad names?—No; he waited quietly till the High Priest allowed Him to speak. And while he was waiting God made his face shine like the face of an angel.

Presently the High Priest spoke. He said, "Are these things so?" Then S. Stephen knew that it was time for him to speak. I cannot tell you all which he said; but he began by reminding the High Priest and the rest of the Council how their fathers had always been disobedient to God, and how when God had sent messengers to them, they had always set themselves against the messengers. It was God the Holy Ghost Himself Who put these words into S. Stephen's mouth. These wicked people, however, did not care for God at all; and at last, before S. Stephen had done speaking, they became so very angry that they gnashed their teeth at him like wild beasts.

Would not you have been frightened if you had been there, and if all those wicked Jews had gnashed their teeth at you? But S. Stephen was not frightened at all. He knew that he had been doing right, and that God was pleased with him; and he looked up to heaven, and I dare say he prayed to God in his heart. And while he looked up into the sky God made him see a sight which must not only have comforted him, but filled him with joy. He saw heaven open, and the glory of God, and the Lord Jesus standing on God's right hand. Then he spoke once more to the wicked Jews, and told them what he saw; but they would not hear. They stopped their ears, and ran at him all together, and hurried him outside.

the city, and threw large stones at him till he died. S. Stephen kept praying to Christ as long as he could speak, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And just before he died he said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." S. Stephen prayed for those who were stoning him, just as the Lord Jesus had prayed for those who were crucifying *Him*.

S. Stephen was the first man who was killed for being a Christian. He was called a *martyr*. Have you not heard these words sung in church—"The noble army of *martyrs* praise Thee?" A martyr is one who is put to death for serving Christ. S. Stephen was the *first* martyr; and there have been a great many martyrs after him. The martyrs are now in great happiness. They love us who are still on the earth, and they pray for us, because we belong to the same fellowship to which they belong.* That fellowship is the holy Catholic Church. They were members of it when they were in the body, and they are members of it still, now that they are departed. And they love us and pray for us, because we are members of it along with them.

This is one reason why particular days are kept in honour of them. The day which is

* If they pray for judgment on enemies (Rev. vi. 9, 10), how much more for mercy on friends! See also 1 Cor. xii. 26; and remember that of *Christian sympathy intercessory prayer is the proper expression*.



Lessons on the Kingdom.

Day in honour of S. Stephen is the day after
Christmas Day. It is called S. Stephen's Day.
We remember them also on *All Saints' Day*.
That is the first of November.

HYMN.

Jesus, Lord, Thy praise we sing.—P. H. 229.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What did the seven Deacons do after they had been
ordained?

Was there any other sort of work which S. Stephen
did?

Did the Jews believe what S. Stephen said to them?
Tell me how some of them behaved to him.

Where did they bring him?

What did they say that S. Stephen had done? Was
that true or false?

What commandment were those men breaking?
Repeat it.

What did God do to S. Stephen's face while S.
Stephen's enemies were speaking against him?

Was he allowed to speak for himself?

Did the Council hear all which he had got to say?

When S. Stephen looked up, what did he see?

What did the Council do to him then?

What were the last words which he said before he
died?

What title was given to S. Stephen after his death?

What is a martyr?

What do the martyrs do for us?

LESSON XI.

S. PHILIP THE DEACON.

ARE you not sorry to hear how S. Stephen was put to death? But S. Stephen was not the only Christian who was made to suffer; almost every Christian in Jerusalem had to suffer something or other for being a follower of the Lord Jesus. Some of the Christians were put in prison, and some were obliged to leave their homes and go to other places where they might be allowed to live in peace. The Apostles were the only ones who stayed at Jerusalem. Yet God brought good out of all this harm: for wherever the Christians went, they taught people about the Lord Jesus, and thus a great many persons came to know about the Lord, and to become members of the Church, who otherwise would not have known anything about Christ at all. Those who went through any great sufferings for Christ's sake, but without being killed, are called *Confessors*.

One of those who went away from Jerusalem at this time was S. Philip the Deacon. He went to a part of Palestine which was called Samaria, and told the people there about Christ: how He had died, and come to

life again, and gone up to heaven, and how He will one day come again and judge all men. And while S. Philip preached thus, God enabled him to do many wonderful things besides. Some sick people were healed ; some lame people were made able to walk ; there were, moreover, some wretched people whose bodies were being held by evil spirits, and S. Philip forced the evil spirits to go out. So there was great joy in the place ; the people believed what S. Philip told them, and did as he advised them ; and as they determined to join the Church, the company of Christ's people, S. Philip baptized them, and that made them members of it.

I shall now tell you of another man who came from a long way to the south ; and how he also was joined to the company of Christ's Church.

Soon after S. Philip had baptized the people of Samaria, God the Holy Ghost spoke to him. This is what God the Holy Ghost said : " Arise, and go towards the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."

What is a desert place ? A wild place, where there are no fields or gardens, and very few trees, or perhaps none at all. What a strange thing then S. Philip had to do ! But he did not stop to wonder or ask questions. God had told him to go, and he went.

When he was at the road which led from

Jerusalem to Gaza, he heard the sound of wheels, and saw a chariot driving along. There were two men in it. Their skins were not white as ours is, they were dark. One of these men was driving, the other was reading aloud. Who do you think he was? and what book do you think he was reading?

I will tell you. A long way to the south there was a country called *Ethiopia*. The queen of that country was called *Candace*. She had a great deal of money and other treasure, and this man was the officer who took care of it for her. He had learnt something about God; he knew that God had a temple at Jerusalem, and that people might go and pray to Him there; and he had gone to Jerusalem in order to pray himself to God, and perhaps to learn something about God beyond what he already knew. I suppose Queen Candace had given him leave to go, and now he was going back again. But what was the book which he was reading? He had got, in Jerusalem, a copy of the Prophet Isaiah, and that was what he was reading; and he was reading in the fifty-third chapter, where Isaiah says, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of My people was He stricken."

When the chariot drove up, God the Holy Ghost spoke to S. Philip again, and said, "Run up to that chariot." S. Philip did ; and he said to the man who was reading, "Do you understand what you are reading ?" "No," said the man ; "how can I understand it unless some one explains it to me ?" Then he thought that S. Philip might perhaps be able to tell him what the passage of Isaiah meant ; so he said, "Will you come up and sit with me here ?" "Yes," said S. Philip ; so he took him up into the chariot and showed him what he was reading. "Now," said the man, "here are these words of Isaiah,—what are they about ? Is Isaiah speaking about himself, or about some one else ?" "Those words," said S. Philip, "are about Jesus the Son of God: He it is Who was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and Who, when He was being judged, was so quiet and patient ; at last the wicked people crucified Him, but when He died He got forgiveness for all the world : and now God has raised him to life again, and taken Him up to heaven, in order that He may save all people ; and He will save all people who believe in Him and do as He has commanded. And if you are sorry for your sins and wish to be one of His people, you may be baptized, and that will make you a member of His Church, and your sins will be forgiven you."

Thus S. Philip spoke ; and he said a great

deal more. Now all this while the chariot was moving on, and at last they came to a place where there was some water. Then the man said to S. Philip, "Here is some water—why should I not be baptized at once?" So without more ado,* he bade the driver stop, and got out of the chariot; S. Philip also got out, and they went down into the water, and S. Philip baptized him. And as soon as the baptism was done, the Holy Ghost caught away S. Philip, and set him down at a place some distance off. The man, however, went on, and returned to his own country, and I have no doubt told the Queen his mistress, and all his neighbours as well, what wonderful things he had been taught, and in what a wonderful way he had been taught them: and also how S. Philip had baptized him, and immediately been caught away. And I dare say some of them turned to the Lord Jesus, and became members of His Church themselves; for until they got some Apostle, or Elder, or Deacon to come to them, God would allow them to be baptized by the man who taught them.

HYMN.*For the Baptism of a Grown Person.**In token that thou shalt not fear.**H. A. & M. 352; P. H. 348.*

* In Acts viii., verse 37 is unquestionably spurious. See the Greek Testament as edited by Tischendorf, Alford, or Tregelles.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

- Was S. Stephen the only man who suffered for being a Christian ?
What became of the Apostles ?
What became of the other members of the Church in Jerusalem ?
Where did S. Philip the Deacon go ?
What did he do there ?
Did the people believe him ?
Where did the Holy Ghost tell him to go next ?
When he went, what did he see ?
What was the man doing ?
What did he ask S. Philip to do ?
Did S. Philip do as he was asked ?
What else did he ask S. Philip to do as they went on ?
Did S. Philip do as he was asked this time ?
What became of S. Philip then ?
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LESSON XII.

THE FIRST-RECORDED CONFIRMATION.

We must now come back again to Samaria, and to that city in which S. Philip the Deacon had been preaching and working miracles. I told you how when the people of that city believed what S. Philip told them, and desired to be the Lord's followers, S. Philip baptized them.

Was it enough for them to have been baptized ? No ; It would make them Christ's soldiers, but now, as they were Christ's sol-

diers, they would have to fight against the devil and his angels,—they would have to set themselves against all the wickedness which was in the world around, and they would have to bring down all the self-will and self-conceit which was within their own hearts. And for all this they would need a great deal of strength—not bodily strength, but spiritual strength.

How would they get this spiritual strength? —You know, my dear children, whose business it is to make us strong against all kinds of sin and evil, so that we may get to be quite good; whose business is it?—It is the business of God the Holy Ghost. Now you know that the Lord Jesus Christ went up to heaven and began to plead for us with His Body and Blood before God, and by so doing He got the Holy Ghost for us; and so you have heard how the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles. But He had not come down upon the people of Samaria; no, not even upon those who had been baptized, and had become Christ's subjects and soldiers.

Would God give His Holy Spirit to these people? Yes, He would if they asked Him; but He would not give Him to them in the same way as He had given Him to the Apostles. When God had given the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, the Holy Ghost had come down straight from heaven. Now, however, God would give Him through the ministry of the Apostles.

The Apostles knew that God would in time to come give the Spirit by means of them ; and so when they heard that these people of Samaria had been baptized, but had not received the Spirit, they appointed that S. Peter and S. John should go down to them for the purpose of conferring or giving Him. So S. Peter and S. John took their journey, and came, either the same day, or some time the next day, to the place where these people lived. Then when they were come together in the place which they used for a church, S. Peter and S. John made solemn prayer to God for the people, that God would give them the Holy Ghost. And then they laid their hands upon the head of each ; and as they did so, the Holy Ghost came to each to dwell within him and to make him strong for living as a Christian ought to do.

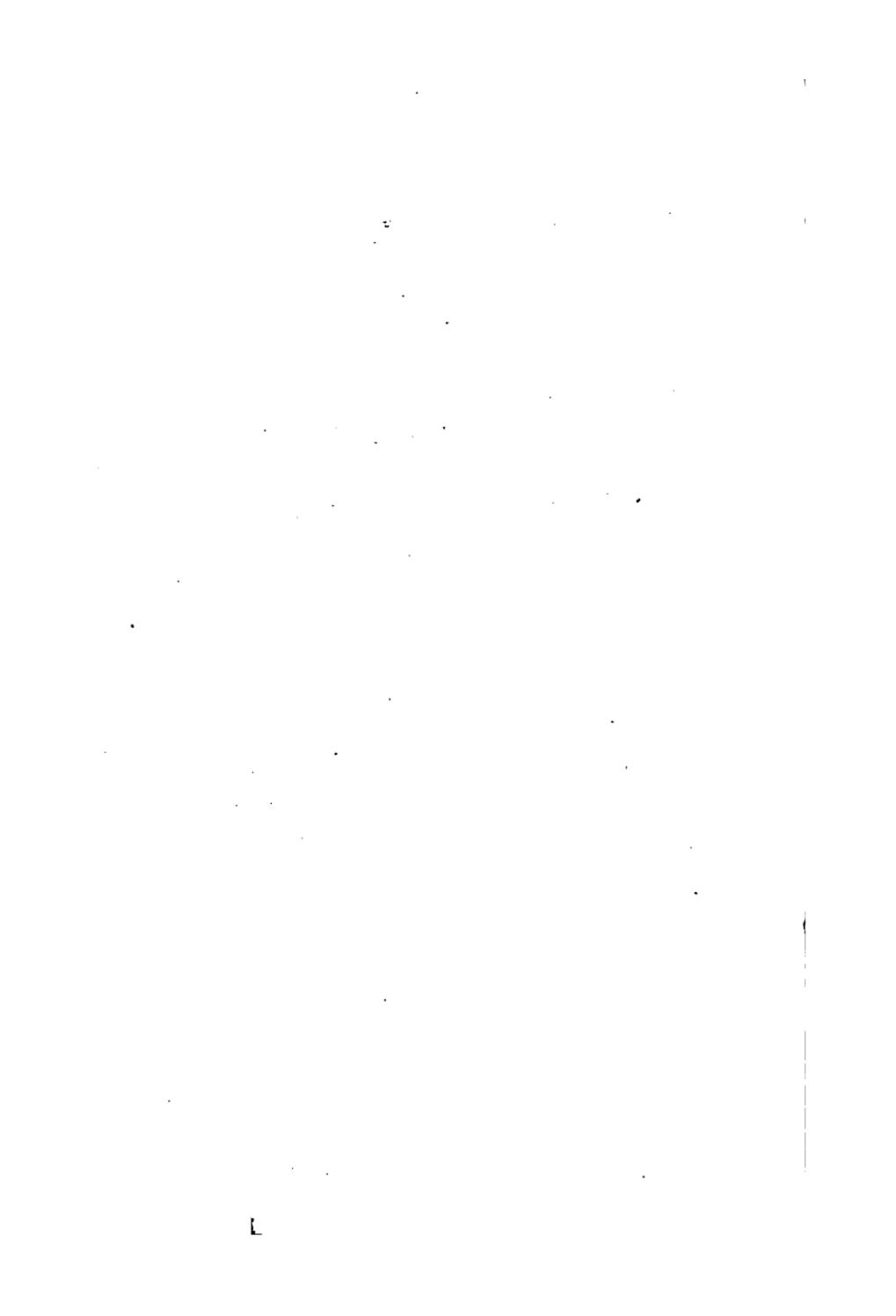
What a solemn and beautiful sight it must have been to see S. Philip the Deacon bringing up, one by one, these people whom he had taught and baptized, and presenting them before the Apostles ! and then to see them kneel down, while the Apostles laid their hands on each in the name of the Lord !—I hope, my dear children, that the like will be done to you one day. The Apostles have been dead long ago ; but God still gives His Spirit, for God meant all Christian people to have Him ;* and

* “ That He may abide with you for ever.”—S. John xiv. 16.



THE CONFIRMATION OF THE SAMARITAN CHRISTIANS.

To face p. 70.



all Christian people must have Him, for if they have Him not, they will not be able to lead holy lives as Christians ought to lead. And therefore when the Apostles began to die off, they appointed men, whom we now call Bishops, to take in some measure their place : and from that time to this the Bishops have gone about, laying their hands on Christian people as the Apostles did. This is what we call *Confirmation*. The people of Samaria were confirmed when S. Peter and S. John laid their hands on them ; and you will be confirmed and receive some measure of God's Spirit, when the Bishop lays his hands upon you. The Bishops are as much God's ministers as the Apostles were. It is not their goodness which makes them His ministers ; God can work by means of bad men as well as by means of good men.

HYMN.

The shadow of th' Almighty's cloud.
Christian Year (Confirmation).

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Was it enough for the Samaritans to have been baptized ?

What did they need besides, to make them strong ?

When the Apostles heard that they had been baptized, whom did they appoint to visit the Samaritans ?

What did S. Peter and S. John do when they were arrived?

What do we call that?

Can people expect to have God's Spirit when they will not go and be confirmed?

LESSON XIII.

SAUL'S CONVERSION.

You remember, my dear children, how the wicked Jews stoned S. Stephen to death. When a person was to be stoned to death, those who had to stone him would take off their upper garments, so as to have their arms more at liberty for throwing the stones; and it was the custom for those who had borne witness against him to throw the first stones. Now there was a young man named Saul, about whom I have a great deal to tell you. He came from a place called Tarsus, and was well learned in the Jewish Law; he had also led a very religious life, as far as he knew. I say, as far as he knew, for he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ. He thought that the Lord Jesus was a mere man, and not God, and that He had been a deceiver; and so, I am sorry to say, he thought it was a right thing to do all he could against Christ and those who followed Him. Now this young man was

in the council when S. Stephen was being tried ; and when the wicked people hurried him away and stoned him, Saul approved of what they were doing. He ran along with the rest of the council to see S. Stephen stoned, and when the false witnesses took off their upper garments for the purpose whereof I told you just now, Saul took charge of them.

You would not have thought that that same young man would some time afterwards be one of the greatest of the Apostles, and yet so it was. And I shall now tell you how it came about.

Saul was not satisfied with doing all he could against the Christians in Jerusalem ; he wanted to stop the spread of Christ's kingdom in other places as well. Now there was, and there still is, a great many miles from Jerusalem, a large town or city called Damascus. Saul wished very much to get hold of the Christians there, and to bind them, and then to bring them to Jerusalem to be punished. But he could not do this without leave from the Jewish High Priest ; so he asked the High Priest, and the High Priest gave him leave. The High Priest wrote letters to some of the rulers and magistrates at Damascus, asking them to help Saul in getting hold of the Christians ; and then he gave the letters to Saul to take with him, and so Saul set off. Saul meant to carry the letters to the rulers and magistrates at Damascus, and when they

had read them, they would help him to get hold of the Christians. Saul still thought that he was doing quite right, and he made sure that God would be very much pleased with him. So you see that people can be doing what they think right, and yet the thing may be in itself quite wrong, nay, very wicked.

Saul travelled for several days ; at last he got near Damascus. "Now," he thought, "I shall soon get hold of the Christians there—what a fine thing it will be to punish them all ! we shall soon put a stop to the new religion!"

It was about noon ; the sun was shining brightly, but just at that time there flashed out from the sky a light which was far brighter. It came from heaven, and shone all round Saul and those who were with him. They all fell to the ground, though no one of them knew what made them fall ; but just then they heard an awful sound which filled them with terror. What sound was it ? It was the voice of God—the voice of God the Son, the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He spoke to Saul, and said, "Saul, Saul, why are you seeking to hurt Me ?"

No one but Saul heard these words. The other men heard an awful sound, but they could not make out what it was. What did the Lord Jesus mean ? Why, when any harm is done to one of His disciples, the Lord Jesus

counts it as done to Himself. Now Saul was seeking to harm the Christians at Damascus, and therefore the Lord Jesus counted that Saul was seeking to harm *Him*.

In the midst of that awful light which was shining the Lord Jesus Himself appeared. Saul saw Him, though the men who were with Saul saw no more than the light. "Lord," said he, "Who art Thou?" Then the Lord spoke again—"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are seeking to hurt." Then Saul said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And the Lord Jesus answered, "Get up and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told you what you are to do." So Saul got up, and the Lord Jesus disappeared from his sight; and indeed when Saul had opened his eyes, he found that he could not see anything at all—the brightness of the light had quite blinded him. But the men who were with him led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.

All the rest of that day passed, and all the next day too, and still Saul was unable to see. What did he do all the time? He kept quite quiet: he felt full of sorrow for what he had been doing—he felt so sorry that he would not eat or drink; and he prayed very earnestly that God would forgive him. At last, however, the third day came, and then Saul heard some more about the Lord Jesus, as I will tell you now.

You know that there were in Damascus a great many people who loved the Lord Jesus and obeyed Him as His subjects. One of these was named Ananias, and he was such a very good man that even the Jews spoke well of him. I suppose the Jews at Damascus were not as wicked as the Jews at Jerusalem. But however that might be, while Saul was waiting, fasting, (that is, abstaining from food,) and praying, and blind, the Lord Jesus appeared to Ananias in a vision, and said, "Go into the street which is called Straight; a man lives there named Judas—in his house you will find Saul of Tarsus; you are to put your hands upon him and so recover him of his blindness." Now Ananias was very much surprised at this—he said, "Lord, Saul has been doing a great deal of harm to Thy people at Jerusalem, and came here on purpose to do harm to Thy people here." But the Lord Jesus said, "Go and do as I told you; I have chosen Saul that he may teach a great many people in many countries about Me." Then Ananias obeyed; he found Saul, and said to him, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, Who showed Himself to you as you came, has sent me that I may put my hands upon you and make you able to see again." Saul was very glad to hear this; he let Ananias lay his hands upon him, and as soon as Ananias did so there fell from Saul's eyes something like scales, and he was able to see.

Do you not think that Saul loved the Lord Jesus very much for sparing him and not striking him dead? O yes, Saul wished now to be one of the Lord's most faithful servants. But as yet he was only a Jew, and his sins were not forgiven him; so Ananias baptized him (I suppose it was Ananias who did), and that made him one of Christ's subjects, a member of Christ's Church, and his sins were washed away, and God gave him the Holy Spirit.

HYMN.

The Shepherd now was smitten.

H. A. & M 245; P. H. 238.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

When a person was to be stoned, what did those people do who had to stone him?

Who took care of the clothes of those people who stoned S. Stephen? Whence did he come? Was he old or young? What sort of a life had he led?

Tell me something which Saul was eager to do for the purpose of pleasing God.

Where did he go for the purpose of doing that?

Did he do all which he intended to do?

What stopped him? What did he see? What did he hear?

What did the Lord Jesus say to Saul? What did He tell Saul to do?

How did Saul pass the rest of that day, and all the next day, and part of the third day?

Whom did the Lord send to Saul?

What did he do to Saul?

LESSON XIV.

How GENTILES WERE FIRST BROUGHT INTO THE CHURCH.

WHAT do we mean when we speak of *Gentiles*? We mean all the people in the world who were not Jews. At the time of which I have been telling you, all the members of Christ's Church *were* Jews; the Apostles were Jews; the people in Jerusalem were Jews; the people of Samaria were counted as Jews; and so was the man who took care of Queen Candace's treasures. Nobody might be taken into Christ's Church, nobody might be baptized, save only such as were Jews; and if a Gentile heard about Christ and believed, he could not be baptized until he had first become a Jew. You must know, too, that there were some kinds of meat which God did not allow Jews to eat. A Jew might eat beef and mutton, but not hare or rabbit, or pork. Neither might he eat any blood, or the flesh of any animal which had been strangled. You shall now hear how God began to let Gentiles be baptized, and so taken into the Church, without their becoming Jews at all.

You remember how when S. Philip had baptized the man from Ethiopia, the Holy

Ghost caught S. Philip away, and set him down at a place which lay at some distance off. The name of that place was *Azotus*. S. Philip taught the people there about the Lord Jesus Christ, as He had taught the people in Samaria; and then he went on to the next town and the same there, and so on until he came to a town called *Cæsarea*.

Now in the town of Cæsarea there lived a man named *Cornelius*. He was not a Jew, but a Gentile. He was an officer in the Roman army; there were a great many soldiers under him, and he had to lead them to battle, and they had to obey his commands. He was, however, a very good man: he prayed to the true God every day, and gave a great deal to poor people. And I am happy to say that his servants were like himself; and so also was one of his soldiers, though whether there were any more such soldiers I do not know.

One day Cornelius determined to keep a time of special prayer: so, in order to make his prayers go up to God the better, he set himself to keep a fast (that is, not to eat any food) until the afternoon. This is one way of serving God: the Lord Jesus fasted once for forty days and forty nights. And though He did not usually fast after He began to preach, yet He gave leave to His disciples to fast; and He promised that if we fast for a right purpose, that is, if we fast to please God

and not merely for the purpose of being seen by men, God would reward us.*

Cornelius kept his fast till three o'clock in the afternoon. I dare say that by that time he felt very hungry: but he knew that by fasting he was preparing himself to seek God the better, and that God would be pleased with him, and this made him go through with his fast as he had determined at first. And when it was three o'clock—the time when the evening sacrifice was offered in the Temple at Jerusalem—Cornelius prayed to God; and I have no doubt but he prayed very earnestly. He could not go to the Temple, for Cæsarea was many miles away from Jerusalem, so he prayed in his own house, and God heard him, and God sent an angel to speak to him.

The angel came in, and called Cornelius by his name—"Cornelius!" Cornelius had never seen an angel before, so he felt afraid. But the angel went on to say, "God has heard your prayer, and He is pleased with you for giving away so much to the poor. Send now some men to Joppa, and let them find out there the house of Simon the tanner, and ask for a man named Peter, who lodges there; he shall tell you what it is right for you to do."

When the angel was gone, Cornelius called two of his servants, and the soldier of whom I told you before, and told them what he had

* Matt. vi. 16-18.

seen and heard ; and then he bade them go to Joppa, and find out S. Peter, and get him to come with them to Cornelius's house.

Joppa was not very near Cæsarea, so it was not until about noon the next day that Cornelius's messengers had got there, and had found out the house where S. Peter lodged. But what was S. Peter doing in the meanwhile ?

S. Peter was on the top of the house, praying. (You know that the tops of houses in those countries are not sloping, like the roofs of *our* houses, but quite flat, so that you can walk about upon them.) I do not know whether S. Peter had been keeping a fast, like Cornelius. Perhaps he *had* been keeping a fast, though not so long a one as Cornelius had been keeping the day before ; for before S. Peter had ended his prayers he became very hungry indeed. He asked to have something to eat ; but it so happened that just then there was nothing ready, so that S. Peter had to wait. I do not think he was impatient or out of temper ; would you have been, if *you* were hungry, and had to wait for *your* dinner ?

While S. Peter was waiting, he fell into a sort of sleep, called a trance ; and God caused him to see a vision, which seemed very strange. It seemed as if heaven were open, and a great sheet let down out of it, and in the sheet there were all manner of living

creatures ; and at the same time there came a voice, saying, “ Get up, Peter ; kill and eat.”

Then Peter said, “ Not so, Lord, for I have never yet eaten anything common.” By which he meant anything which was forbidden to a Jew. But the voice came again, and said, “ What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” Three times the same thing was said, and then all were drawn up again into heaven.

It was a very strange vision. And S. Peter wondered what it could mean. But just then there was a knock at the gate outside ; and some one called and said, “ Does any one lodge here named Simon Peter ?” You can guess who these men were ; they were the messengers who had come from Cornelius. Before, however, any one could run up and tell S. Peter that he was wanted, God the Holy Ghost Himself spoke to S. Peter and said, “ There are three men come for you. Go down stairs and take your journey with them, for I have sent them.” So S. Peter went down and brought the men in, and gave them something to eat and drink : they rested with him that afternoon, and the next day they went away, and S. Peter went with them ; there went also six other Jews, who were Christians, and friends of S. Peter.

Cæsarea was some way off, as I told you ;

so they did not get there that day ; but they did get there the next day, and Cornelius was waiting for them, and had got a number of his friends together that they also might see S. Peter, and hear what he had got to say. And as soon as Peter was at the door, Cornelius met him and knelt down to him. But S. Peter made him get up. "Stand up," said he ; "I myself also am a man."

When S. Peter was come into the room where all the company were, he said, " You know that it is an unlawful thing for a Jew like me to keep company with Gentiles ; but God has showed me that I may now keep company with Gentiles as well as with Jews ; and so you see that I am come here ; will you tell me, then, why you have sent for me ?" Then Cornelius told him all about the angel, and what the angel had said. Then S. Peter knew that God would have him tell these Gentiles about the Lord Jesus, how He had come forth from God ; and how He had lived a life of holiness and kindness, and been crucified, and how God had brought Him to life again, and taken Him up to heaven, and that He will come again to judge the quick and the dead ; and that all those who take Him for their Saviour in His way, shall have their sins forgiven them.

So S. Peter began to tell them this. But while he was saying it, and before he had time to say more than a very little, the Holy Ghost

fell upon Cornelius and all the other Gentiles who were there. They had never been baptized, and therefore of course they could not have been confirmed; but Christ sent down the Holy Spirit upon them just as He had done upon the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost; and they began to praise God in new tongues which they had never learned. Now, then, S. Peter knew that the Lord would have Gentiles taken into His kingdom without their first becoming Jews; so he bade them be baptized at once, because (as you know) that was the way in which people *were* to be taken into Christ's kingdom. And they were baptized; and from that time to this, Christ's Church has been made up partly of Jews and partly of Gentiles. And the company of people who make up Christ's kingdom, or Christ's Church, is called the Holy *Catholic* Church. "Catholic" means *gathered from out of all nations*.

HYMN.

All praise to God the Father,
The Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sought and called us Gentiles
From out of every coast,
To join His ancient people,
In the Body of His Son,
That we, in Him rejoicing,
Might know Him God alone.

Beneath a cruel bondage
For ages we had sighed;
Serving our greatest enemy,
Who the true God had defied;

Giv'n up to lusts and passions,
In ignorance and sin,
And wretchedness, uncheer'd
By any hope within.

Far off were we from Zion :
In her we had no part ;
No tidings of a Saviour
To cheer our fainting heart :
No hope of Satan's downfall
To us had ever come,
No word of promised glory,
No thought of heavenly home.

But God, in love outshining,
Hath looked upon our night,
That we of Him for ever
Might have the blissful sight.
First, by His Son atoning,
He made a peace for all,
And now in love He brings us
To His paternal hall.

Cornelius the centurion,
When fasting to the Lord,
Was bidden by the angel
To seek the Gospel word :
He heard the word, believed it,
And straight the Spirit sped
Down from eternal glory,
Upon Cornelius' head.

Henceforth in Jesus' Body
Gentiles and Jews are one ;
One Lord for all, one Spirit,
One Father, God alone ;
Baptized alike divinely
Into One sacred Name,
One creed alike receiving,
One hope alike they claim.

Wherefore, our voice upraising,
Let us these mercies own,
Our heavenly Father praising,
And Saviour, God the Son :
In th' unity of the Spirit
One God for evermore
He was, and is, and shall be,
For ages to adore.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

When S. Philip had been set down at Azotus, where did he go ?

Tell me the name of a man who lived at Cæsarea. Was he a Jew or a Gentile ? What was his business ? What sort of a man was he ? What sort of servants had he ?

Tell me what he saw one day. About what time of day was that ? What was Cornelius doing ? What had he been doing up to that hour ?

What did the angel bid him do ?

Where was S. Peter then ?

What had S. Peter been doing when the messengers came ?

What had he been seeing ? What had been said to him ?

Who came for S. Peter just at that time ; Did S. Peter go with them ? When did they start ? Did any one else go with S. Peter and the men ? How many ?

When they all got to Cæsarea, and S. Peter had begun to speak about Christ, what happened to Cornelius and his company ?

What did S. Peter then bid them ?

LESSON XV.

S. PAUL AND S. BARNABAS.

We must now come back to Saul, or (as we will call him) *Saint Paul*. I cannot tell you now all which S. Paul did after he had become a Christian, but after going to various places he came to a place which was called *Antioch*, the first place where Christ's followers were called *Christians*. S. Paul stopped there a whole year. And there was another man also at Antioch of whom you have heard before—I mean S. Barnabas, the man who had sold his land and brought all the money which he had got for it to the Apostles. S. Barnabas it was who had brought S. Paul to Antioch. S. Paul and S. Barnabas used to teach the Christians there. It pleased God, however, that they should do a higher sort of work than that of mere teaching; God intended to make Apostles of them. God the Holy Ghost had already called them to be Apostles; but they had not begun to do the work of Apostles as yet. And no one, I suppose, knew of their having been called.

Now there were some other teachers at Antioch, and prophets too, besides S. Paul and S. Barnabas. And one day, when they were doing some solemn service to the Lord

Jesus, praying to Him and singing His praises, and keeping a fast, the Holy Ghost put some words into the mouth of one of the prophets. For that was a sort of thing which the Holy Ghost used often to do in those times. This time the words were, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Then the prophets and teachers kept another solemn fast together, and then they prayed and laid their hands on the heads of S. Paul and S. Barnabas: and from that time forward S. Paul and S. Barnabas have always been accounted to be Apostles as much as S. Peter or S. John.*

When S. Paul and S. Barnabas had been thus separated to be Apostles, they began to do Apostles' work. What was this? It was the bringing as many people as they could to be Christ's subjects, and to make them members of the Church, so that they might come at last to be saved. All the people in the world except the Jews were under the power of Satan;† S. Paul and S. Barnabas had to go to as many places as they could and tell people how God had given His Son to save them, and then when people believed what they heard, S.

* This *separation* was not an *ordination*. S. Paul's apostleship was neither "of man" nor "by man." Gal. i. 1.

† See 1 John v. 19; 1 Cor. x. 20; and about the Jews, Deut. vii. 6.

Paul and S. Barnabas would have them baptized, and that would take them out of Satan's power and put them in Christ's kingdom.* And when any person had been baptized, but had not received the Holy Ghost, S. Paul and S. Barnabas could confirm them, as S. Peter and S. John could confirm the people of Samaria ; and when a great many people in one place had thus been gathered into Christ's Church, S. Paul and S. Barnabas could ordain some of them to be Priests or Deacons, like those whom the Apostles at Jerusalem had ordained ; and then these Priests and Deacons might guide their fellow-Christians in Christ's ways, and might order them accordingly as might be most for Christ's honour, and might minister to them the holy Sacraments.

You think, I dare say, that this was very pleasant work. And no doubt it was a very pleasant thing and a very honourable thing to be employed in spreading Christ's kingdom and gathering people into it ; but it was, notwithstanding, very hard work. S. Paul and S. Barnabas had to make journeys by land and voyages by sea ; and they had to en-

* This it is to which S. Paul refers in Col. i. 13, where the terms used must denote, not a change of *character within*, but a change of *position without*. In Acts xxvi. 18, S. Paul's preaching is spoken of as leading men to desire the same outward change. And by comparing John iii. 5, and Titus iii. 5, we see that the change is wrought by means of water and the Spirit —*i.e.*, by the ministration of Christian baptism.

counter many dangers, many more dangers than travellers have to encounter now-a-days. The ships in which people then sailed were not so well built as ours are, and they often sank or were wrecked; the roads were bad; there were not so many bridges as we have, and people often had to cross rivers without either bridges or boats, and so were in danger of being carried off their feet and drowned. There were many robbers too; so S. Paul and S. Barnabas might easily have been robbed, or even murdered; and more than once they were really very near being murdered, though not by robbers—for when they told the people about the Lord Jesus, the Jews often stirred up the Gentiles against them. Thus it came to pass that once S. Paul was stoned, and everybody thought him to be dead, till all at once he got up and was able to go on his journey the next day. The Lord Jesus Himself must have made him well. And God was always with these two Apostles, and enabled them to work several miracles; and He gave them good success, so that a great many Gentiles and some Jews turned to the Lord Jesus and were taken into His Church; and at last He brought S. Paul and S. Barnabas back again to Antioch in safety.

When a number of people in one place had become Christians, the Apostles used to form them into one congregation or church: and thus we read about the Church which was at

Corinth, the Church which was at Thessalonica, the Churches which were in Galatia, and so on. These congregations or churches were all so many branches of the One *Catholic* Church. They had all one Faith; they all owned one King, the Lord Jesus Christ; they all had the same sort of rulers or pastors under Him; all their members had been baptized; they all had the same Holy Ghost dwelling in them; and they all expected to share in one glory when the Lord should come again.

HYMN.

(For *S. Barnabas' Day.*)Thou, Barnabas, hast won repose.—*P. H.* 253.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What was the name of the place where Christ's disciples were first called Christians?

Who were staying at Antioch, whose names you have heard before?

Were there any other prophets and teachers at Antioch besides S. Paul and S. Barnabas?

What words did God the Holy Ghost put into the mouth of one of them?

What did the prophets and teachers do when the Holy Ghost said this?

What was the work which S. Paul and S. Barnabas would have to do? Was that easy work or hard work? Tell me some dangers which S. Paul and S. Barnabas would have to encounter in doing it.

LESSON XVI.

THE FIRST COUNCIL.

THERE were now a great many Gentiles as well as Jews who were believing in Christ and had been taken into His Church. These Gentile Christians were mostly to be found in two countries called *Syria* and *Cilicia*; they had believed what the Apostles had told them, they loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and they served Him in the way which the Apostles had taught them.

So that Christ's Church was now made up of two great parties, Jews and Gentiles. Now the Jews, as you know, were descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—they were some of the same people to whom God had given a great many laws by Moses, and those Jews who loved God still obeyed the same laws.

Had God given Gentiles the same laws which He had given to the Jews? No; the Apostles had given the Gentiles some precepts as to what God would have them do, and what He would have them not do, but there were a great many commandments which God had given to the Jews, but which He had not given to Gentiles at all. For instance, the Gentiles knew that God would have them kind to their

neighbours, and not steal or tell lies ; but God had not told them how often to say their prayers ; He had not told them how often to fast ; He had not told them at what times to leave off working ; He had not told them what kinds of food they might eat ; He had not told them what kinds of food they might not eat ; He had not told them how much of their money or other things they were to give away in charity. To the Jews God had given commandments about all these things, and when you are older you may read those commandments in the Bible ; but to the Gentiles God had not given any such commandments at all.

Now at the time about which I am speaking there were some Christian Jews who thought that Gentiles also ought to keep the Jewish Law, and even to become Jews altogether. They thought that if God gave a law to Jews He must mean it to be kept by Gentiles as well. You remember my reading to you about the Holy Ghost's coming down on Cornelius and his company. Well, up to that time, before Gentiles could be baptized and made Christians, they always had to become Jews, and therefore these Jews thought that the same rule must needs hold good afterwards. Thus, then, some of them went to the Gentiles and said to them, " It is necessary for you to become Jews and to keep all the law of Moses ; and if you do not do so, you cannot be saved."

Was it right of them to speak thus ? No ;

it was wrong. They thought that what they said was true, but that did not *make* it true; and they had no business to say it *was* true when it was no more than what *they thought* to be true. They should not have said, "If you do not become Jews, you cannot be saved;"—if they said anything at all, it should have been this—"If you do not become Jews, and keep all the law, *we think* you cannot be saved."

How were these Jews to find out what was really true? They ought to have asked the Apostles. There were two Apostles at Antioch, S. Paul and S. Barnabas; these Apostles told them that they were mistaken, but yet they would not believe even them, but thought that they knew better themselves. And they still kept on saying to the Gentile Christians, "You must become Jews, and keep all the Law, for if you do not, you cannot be saved."

What could S. Paul and S. Barnabas do? If they talked to them and said, "You are mistaken," they would answer, "We think we are not mistaken—you are just as likely to be mistaken as we." What then could S. Paul and S. Barnabas say more? What could they do?

You know, my dear children, that the company of Christian people gathered under their lawful rulers or pastors is called the Catholic Church. God formed His people thus into one company, as you have heard; and why

did He do this? One reason was, in order that the people in the world might come to know more easily what is really true.* So you see that if any persons could get the Church together and ask the Church what was the truth which she had received, and if the Church were to tell them, "The truth is so and so," they would know then what the truth was.

Now the chief congregation of the Church was at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the *mother* church, and all the little Churches which were to be found scattered here and there over Syria and Cilicia were *daughter-churches*. Those preachers who had taught them about Christ, and had gathered them into His kingdom, had all come from Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the place where S. Peter was, and those other men who had been of the number of the Twelve. So it was determined that S. Paul and S. Barnabas, with some of the Gentile Christians, should go to Jerusalem and hear what the Church there had to say about the matter in question; and to Jerusalem accordingly, they went.

After they got to Jerusalem, the Apostles

* "That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." (S. John xvii. 21.) "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." (1 S. John iv. 6.)

and Elders who were there met together to consider about the matter : the meeting was called a council. At the council there was first a great deal of talking ; then S. Peter spoke by himself. He said, " Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God sent me to preach to Cornelius and his party, and God gave them the Holy Ghost just as He did to us ; He put no difference between them and us, but accounted it quite enough if they took the Lord Jesus Christ for their Saviour and their Master. Therefore if we now tell them that that is not enough, but that they must become Jews and keep the Law, you may be sure that God will be displeased with us."

Then S. Paul and S. Barnabas spoke ; they said, " Cornelius and his company are not the only Gentiles to whom God has given the Holy Ghost ; God has given Him also to the Gentiles who were got into the Church by us."

After this S. James spoke ; he was not one of the Twelve, but was to the Church at Jerusalem what we should call the Bishop.* He said, " The Gentile Christians need not keep all the law ; it will be quite enough if we write

* This is the unvarying testimony of early Christian writers, and it is confirmed by the way in which he is spoken of in the New Testament, as distinct from the Elders, and representing the Church. That neither he, nor any of the Lord's other " Brethren," were of the number of the Twelve, seems certain from S. John vii. 5.

them a letter, and bid them not join in worshipping idols or in doing any shameful things, and not to eat any blood or anything which has been strangled, because these are things which the Jews think wrong, and as there are Jews everywhere, we should not like them to think worse of us Christians than need be."

This, then, the council resolved to do ; and the letter was written, and S. Paul and S. Barnabas took it back with them to Antioch. There went also with S. Paul and S. Barnabas two prophets whose names were Judas and Silas.

And from that time it has been the rule in the company of Christ's Church that Gentile Christians should not be obliged to keep the Law of Moses, but should merely have the Lord Jesus Christ for their Saviour and their Master, and follow the leadings of God the Holy Ghost according as they are taught by their Pastors.

I am sorry to say that in after years a great many other false teachers rose up besides those of whom I have told you now ; but councils of the Church were held like the Council which was held at Jerusalem, and these councils declared in each case what the truth was as Christ's Church had received it ; and then the truth was written down, and the writing in each case was called a *Creed*. This is why we believe the Creed, because God's Church caused

it to be written. And it would be very wrong for any man or any set of men to alter the Creed, or to add anything to it without the Church's leave.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised to be with His Church always, and He said that the Holy Ghost should guide the Church into all truth.* So if at any time we want to know what the truth is, we must find out what God's Church teaches, and then we shall know that *that* is the truth.†

HYMN.

Onward Christian soldiers.

H. N. 354; P. H. 4; H. A. & M. 385.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Of what two great parties was Christ's Church now made up?

Where did the greater number of Gentile Christians live?

Was there anything which the Jewish Christians did, but which the Gentile Christians had not been taught to do?

Tell me now something which some Jewish Christians said that Gentile Christians ought to do.

Did S. Paul and S. Barnabas own this to be true?

Did those Jewish Christians believe what S. Paul and S. Barnabas said?

* John xvi. 13.

† See the texts quoted in the note on page 95.

Where did they go to have the question settled ?
When the Apostles and Elders came together and
held a council, who spoke ?
When the letter was written, from what things were
the Gentile Christians advised to abstain ?
Who carried the letter ?

LESSON XVII.

MORE ABOUT S. PAUL.

SOME time after S. Paul had returned to Antioch, he started on a long journey. He wished to visit all those places where he and S. Barnabas had gathered churches. And when he had done so, he went to a great many more places besides, and formed new congregations or churches there. S. Barnabas was not with him now ; I am sorry to say he had had a contention with S. Paul as to whether a man should go with them who had left them before. But Silas was with him ; and in the course of his travels he found a very good young man named Timothy, and he also went with S. Paul.

I cannot tell you the names of all the places to which S. Paul went ; but one place was called Ephesus, and another was called Philippi, and another was called Thessalonica, and another was called Corinth. The Chris-

tians at Ephesus made up the Ephesian Church, those at Philippi made up the Philip-pian Church, those at Thessalonica the Thes-salonian Church, those at Corinth the Corin-thian Church. Some of these Churches have continued to this day.

The first time S. Paul went to Ephesus, he found about twelve men who considered them-selves Christians. He asked them, "When you became Christians, did you receive the Holy Ghost?" "No," said they, "nobody said anything about the Holy Ghost." "Why, how was that?" said S. Paul; "how were you baptized?" "John the Baptist baptized us," said they. Then S. Paul said, "That baptism is not enough now: John the Baptist himself told the people that when the promised Saviour came, He was the One Whom they were to follow."

When the men heard this, they were glad to be baptized in the way which Christ had ap-pointed, that so they might be taken into His kingdom. And when they had been baptized, S. Paul confirmed them as S. Peter and S. John had confirmed the Samaritans, and the Holy Ghost came upon them, and made them able to speak with new tongues, and to pro-phesy. And that was the beginning of the Church at Ephesus.

S. Paul was not able to stay very long in one place: so he used to write letters to the Churches which he had gathered. Once after

S. Paul had gone away from Corinth, he heard that the Christians at Corinth were going on very badly. They were very careless in their way of receiving the Holy Communion ; they forgot that the bread and wine when duly blessed became the Lord's Body and Blood, and thus they did not always distinguish between common bread and what was the Lord's Body. There was also a great deal of unkindness amongst themselves, and one man had committed a very shocking sin indeed ; he had married his own stepmother, and that too even while his father was alive.* S. Paul was very sorry when he heard all this ; he wrote the Corinthian Church a very severe letter ; he told them that they were doing very wrong, that the Lord was displeased with them, and that the man who was so very wicked must be put out of their fellowship, and they were not to keep company with him. This letter is in the New Testament : it is called the first Epistle to the Corinthians. It was indeed a very severe letter : but S. Paul knew that the Corinthian Church needed to be sharply rebuked ; and as he wrote the letter, he even wept† to think of the sins which they were allowing.

After S. Paul had sent this letter, he was very anxious to know how the Corinthian

* " His cause that suffered wrong."—2 Cor. vii. 12.

† " Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears."—2 Cor. ii. 4.

Christians had taken it : whether they were ashamed of themselves, and had set themselves to do as S. Paul told them, or whether they were determined to go on in their own ways in spite of what S. Paul said. So he asked a friend of his, named Titus, to go to Corinth and see how matters were. Titus went ; but he did not come back quite as soon as S. Paul expected : and S. Paul was so anxious to hear about his dear Corinthian people, that he could not wait in the place where he was, but went on in hopes of meeting Titus. At last he met him ; and you will be glad to hear that he brought good news. The Corinthian Christians were very sorry for what they had done, and were full of love to S. Paul for his fatherly rebukes. Then S. Paul wrote them another letter. This letter also is in the New Testament : it is called the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. In this other letter S. Paul told them that they were to forgive the man who had been so very wicked. The man was sorry for what he had done ; and S. Paul said he was to be forgiven. This was what he wrote : “To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also.”*

How would the Corinthian Church forgive the man ? The Elders or Priests would forgive him ; and what they did would be counted as done by the whole Church.

* 2 Cor. ii. 10.

But how could the Elders or Priests have power to forgive sins? You know, my dear children, how God the Son became man; now when He became man, God the Father gave Him a special authority to forgive sins, over and above the power which He had had before.* Now when the Lord was risen from the dead, He gave His Apostles some of the same power; He said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."† And when the Apostles ordained Elders or Priests, those Elders or Priests received some of the same authority themselves. This was how the Elders or Priests in the Church of Corinth could forgive the man who had been so wicked. And still the Priests of Christ's Church share in the same power; and when any Christian has done wrong, and is sorry for it, and confesses it, God's Priests may forgive him in the Name of Christ, and then he may know that Christ forgives him. This is called the Ministry of Absolution. How often have you heard it read in Church, that God hath given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins!

* When the Pharisees asked, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (S. Luke v. 21), Christ replied, "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (*ib.* 24; cf. S. Matt. ix. 8). See also S. John v. 27.

† John xx. 21-23.

HYMN.

On Confession and Absolution.

Glory be to Jesus,
 Who a way made plain,
 For restoring sinners
 To His grace again,
 When, in Him believing,
 They repent amain.

When, for sin committed,
 I am full of fear,
 To the Pool I'll hasten,
 And will wash me there :
 By His Priest He'll cleanse me,
 And wipe every tear.

I will ease my bosom,
 And will straight confess
 How His blest commandments
 Vile I did transgress ;
 I will fully utter
 My unworthiness.

In the Book I read it—
 “ Tell your faults anon
 To your brother Christian ;
 Tell them, keep back none ;
 Lest you bear the burden
 By yourself alone.”*

To His Priests He said it—
 “ Those whom ye forgive,
 To My gracious favour
 I at once receive :
 Thus from wounded conscience
 Ye may them relieve.”

* Jas. v. 16 ; Gal. vi. 1-5 ; where “ his own burden,” means *the burden which he is determined to bear all by himself.*

He then who has been ill
"Celing all my shame,
Pain and infirmities,
Freet me from them.
Saying, 'I answer that
In Christ's blessed Name.'"

Then, by meekly pardoned,
And resolved at heart,
Gained all sin to struggle
"Spite of Satan's art,
With new strength refreshed
I'll in peace depart.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Did S. Paul always stay at Antioch?
When S. Paul started on his next journey, did S. Barnabas go with him?

Who did go with S. Paul?
Tell me the names of some places to which S. Paul went.

How had those twelve men been baptized whom S. Paul found at Ephesus?—Was that enough for them?

What did S. Paul tell them that they ought to be?
What did S. Paul do to them?
What good did they get by the laying on of S. Paul's hands?

Tell me some things which the Corinthian Christians had been doing while S. Paul had been away from them.

What did S. Paul do for the purpose of bringing them to a better mind?—How did they take it?

When S. Paul knew that the Corinthian Christians were sorry, what did he bid them do to the man who had married his step-mother?

* See the Office in the Prayer Book, for *Visitation of the Sick.*

How was the man to be forgiven ?

How did the Corinthian elders get authority to forgive sins ?—How did the Apostles get authority to forgive sins ?

Who have authority to forgive sins now ?

LESSON XVIII.

THE RAISING OF EUTYCHUS.

I SHOULD like you to hear about one great miracle which God enabled S. Paul to work. It was the making a dead man alive again.

S. Paul had been travelling about in various countries ; and he was now making a journey to Jerusalem.

Why was he making this journey ? I will tell you. You know that there were at Jerusalem a great many Christians who were poor. Now it was the wish of the Apostles that when S. Paul went among the Gentile Christians in different countries, he should ask them to give money for the relief of those same poor Christians at Jerusalem. And it was but right that S. Paul should do so : it was from Jerusalem that the first preachers of the Gospel had come,—if it had not been for the Church at Jerusalem the Gentile Christians would never have heard about Christ at all, and therefore it was but right that the Gentiles should love

the Christians at Jerusalem, and send money to relieve those of them who were poor. So wherever S. Paul was enabled to plant a Church, that is, to gather a congregation of believers together, there he used to gather up what money the newly-made Christians liked to send for their brethren at Jerusalem. This was what he had been doing now; he had been gathering money for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, and now he was taking to Jerusalem the money which he had gathered.

Was S. Paul travelling all by himself? No. Several Gentile Christians were going with him; for when any congregation had given him some money for the poor, S. Paul would have one of that congregation to go with him, and see him give the money; that so when these Gentile Christians got back to their several homes, they might be able to tell their fellow-Christians how S. Paul had given the money all right, and not kept any for himself.

Now Jerusalem was a long way off, and S. Paul and his companions had to stop at several places by the way. One of the places where they had to stop was called *Troas*.

There were some Christians at Troas already; and it so happened that while S. Paul and his companions were there, a Sunday came round. Now every Sunday, as you know, is a Christian feast-day. We keep Sunday as a day of rejoicing, because on a Sunday—*Easter Sunday*—the Lord came to life again

and rose from the dead. And so it was then : so on this Sunday the Christians at Troas came together to celebrate their Christian sacrifice, that is, the holy Eucharist, as I told you in a former Lesson. They must have been very glad to have S. Paul with them. If there were any among them who had not received the Holy Ghost, S. Paul would be able to confirm them ; and he would be able to help them all forward in their religion in other ways as well.

What sort of a church do you think that the Christians at Troas had, in which to pray to God and celebrate their Christian feast ? It was not such a place as our churches are, with a beautiful high roof, and a tower or bell-turret with bells in it, and a cross on the top to show that the building belonged to Christ, and tall pillars, and carved work, and windows with stained glass in them. I daresay the Christians at Troas would have built such a church, if the heathen around would have let them ; but as things were, if the Christians had built such a church then, the heathen would very soon have pulled it down : so the Christians had to do the best they could, and they used to worship God in a large room at the top of a house. That was their church.

The time when the Christians came together was when it was dark. This was, I suppose, to prevent the heathen from taking notice of them. They lighted a great many lamps : for

it was as I told you a festival-day, and they liked to make the place look cheerful and bright.* Then S. Paul preached to them; and as he was going away the next day, he had a great deal to say now, and his discourse, or sermon, was a very long one.

Now the room was warm, for it was the season of summer:† and although the windows of the room were open, yet the many lamps kept up the heat inside. And in one of the windows there was sitting a young man named *Eutychus*; and what with the heat of the room, and with the length of S. Paul's discourse, Eutychus fell asleep, and in his sleep he fell out of the window to the ground outside, and was killed on the spot.

Down ran some of the Christians to help him; how sorry they must have been, when they lifted him up, and found that he was quite dead! But S. Paul also went down, and he threw himself upon the young man's body, and embraced it in his arms. And when he did so, God brought back Eutychus's soul and spirit, and joined them again to his body, so that Eutychus became alive again.

* The "many lamps" (Acts xx. 8) could not have been wanted in those days for any other reason, as few persons, if any, would have books with them except the readers; and thus none save the readers would want sufficient light to read by. In ancient times the liturgies were committed, not to writing, but to memory.

† The season of Pentecost was approaching. (Acts xx. 16.)

O how happy the Christians now were, to hear S. Paul say, “ Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him ! ” They went upstairs again, and went on with the holy service ; and when the Eucharist was done, S. Paul made another discourse to them, and, I daresay, told them to thank God very much for His having been so kind to one of their number. And although this second discourse lasted until break of day, yet you may be sure that Eutychus took good care not to go to sleep again.

I hope, my dear children, that when you go to church, you take care and not go to sleep or look about you. Even though the church be not a grand place, as a church should be, yet the Lord Jesus Christ is there,—and when we are there, we ought to be either praying to Him or thinking about Him.

HYMN.

For Sunday Morning.

The Sunday morn again is here.

H. N. 8; H. A. & M. 22.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Were there many poor Christians at Jerusalem, or only a few ?

What did the Apostles wish the Gentile Christians to do for the poor Christians at Jerusalem ?

Who was to ask them for the money ?

When the money was gathered, who was to take it ?

To face p. 110.

HOLY COMMUNION.





Where was S. Paul going, at the time of which I have been reading?

Tell me the name of a place at which he stopped.

While he was there, what day came round?

What were the Christians wont to do on that day?

In what sort of a place did the Christians of Troas meet?

At what time did they meet on this Sunday?

Tell me the name of a man who heard S. Paul preach.

What happened to him while S. Paul was preaching?

What did S. Paul do to raise him to life again?

LESSON XIX.

LAST DAYS OF THE APOSTLES.

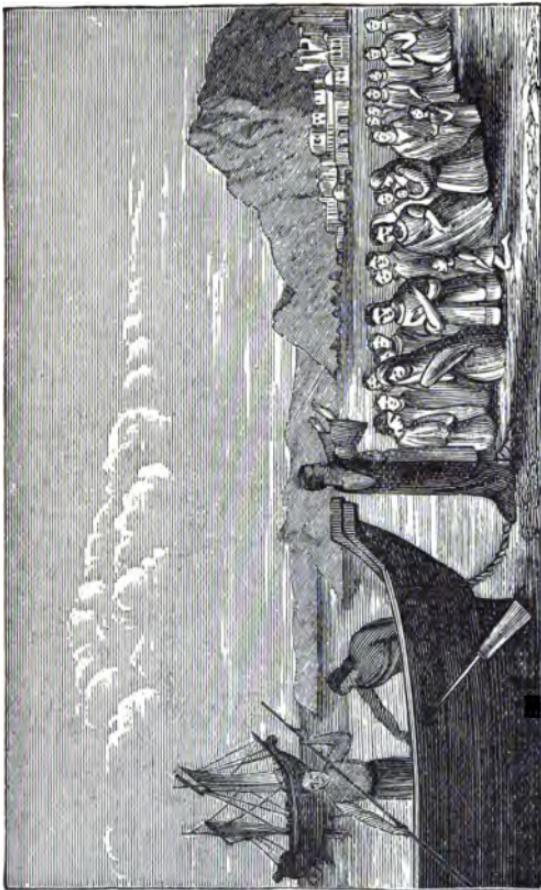
I CANNOT tell you of all the journeys which S. Paul took. Some people think that he came over into England, and that it was he who planted our *Church* of England, just as he had planted the Church of Ephesus, and the Church of Corinth, and so many other Churches.

In the course of time S. Paul felt himself growing infirm and weak. He knew that he would not be able to go about much more; and as the number of Christians were now very much increased, he consecrated two persons to take his place. These persons would have rule over the Elders, or Priests, and over

the Deacons, and over all Christian people in the places where they severally were : and they would have authority to confirm people, that is, as you know, to bring the Holy Ghost upon them by the laying on of their hands ; they could also ordain fresh Elders and Deacons, when any more were wanted. The names of the men were *Timothy* and *Titus*. *Timothy* was appointed to be at Ephesus, and *Titus* at Crete. Crete was a large island where there were many cities, each of which had in it a Church, that is, a congregation of Christians. S. Paul wrote two letters to *Timothy*, and one to *Titus*, in which he told them how they were to live and what they had to do. These letters, or epistles, are in the Bible.

What did the other Apostles do ? They did not stay at Jerusalem ; the Lord had told them to go into all the world, and so one went into one country, and another went into another country. S. James remained at Jerusalem, but then he was not one of the Twelve. He remained because he was Bishop of the Church in Jerusalem.

All the Apostles except S. John were put to death by Jews or heathen. So that all of them except S. John became martyrs. S. Peter and S. Paul were put to death at the same time : S. Paul was beheaded, and S. Peter was crucified. When S. Peter was told that he was to be crucified, he thought himself unworthy to



B. PAUL'S FAREWELL TO THE CHRISTIANS AT TYRE. (Acts xxi. 5.) To face p. 112.

die in exactly the same way in which his Master had died, and so he asked to be crucified head downwards. And so he was. The city where S. Peter and S. Paul were put to death is called Rome. Both those great Apostles were buried at Rome, and a very grand church (called S. Peter's) has been built over their graves. And the people in Rome still show the place where S. Peter was crucified, and the place where S. Paul was beheaded.

When S. John was old he lived at Ephesus, where S. Paul had taught. He, too, was taken up by the heathen for being a Christian, and the heathen Emperor had him thrown into a large vat or caldron full of boiling oil. But S. John came out without being hurt at all. Afterwards he was banished to a distant island called Patmos. (An island, you know, is a piece of land with water all round it.) But the Lord Jesus showed Himself there to S. John, and caused him to see a wonderful set of visions, by which he was taught what things were going to happen. S. John wrote what he saw; and you may read it in the Revelation, the last Book in the Bible.

How would Christ's Church get on after the Apostles were all of them dead?—You know, my dear children, that Christ had promised to be with His Church always until He comes again; so that the Church can never perish altogether. And before the Apostles all died off, they appointed Bishops in various places,

just as S. Paul had appointed Timothy and Titus.

When the Bishop of any Church died, the clergy and the people of that Church chose a person to take his place; and then, if the neighbouring Bishops had nothing to say against him, two or more of them consecrated him; that is, they prayed over him, and laid their hands upon his head, and that made him a Bishop, and brought him some special grace of God the Holy Ghost, for making him a *good* Bishop if he was minded so to be. And Bishops are consecrated in the same way now. And when a man has been consecrated a Bishop, he can minister to people grace of the Holy Ghost, and ordain Priests and Deacons.

This is how the Church has been kept up down to our times. And this is how the Church will be kept up until the Lord comes again.

HYMN.

Christ is gone up ; yet ere he passed.

H. N. 313 ; *H. A. & M.* 414.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What persons did S. Paul consecrate to take his place when he found himself growing old and weak?

What would they have to do?

In what place was Timothy set?

In what island was Titus set?

How would Timothy and Titus know how to live and what to do?
Did the other Apostles stay at Jerusalem?
How was S. Peter put to death?
How was S. Paul put to death?
Was S. Peter put to death in the same way in which the Lord had been?—Why not?—How was he crucified?
Where were S. Peter and S. Paul put to death?
Where did S. John go to live?
What was done to S. John by order of the heathen Emperor?—Did it kill him?—Did it hurt him at all?
What was done to S. John afterwards?
Whom did S. John see in Patmos?—What did the Lord show S. John?
What order of men did the Apostles appoint to govern the Church after they themselves were dead?
How is a Bishop consecrated now?

LESSON XX.

THE CHURCH'S HOPE.

You have heard, my dear children, how the Church was founded—the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church—Christ's Kingdom. And you have heard how those same holy ordinances were first administered, most of which have been in use within the Church from the days of the Apostles until now. You have heard about Confirmation, Holy Communion, Absolution, and Ordination. You

have heard moreover, what means the Apostles took for keeping up the Church, and helping her forward in the Lord's ways, until He comes again, so that the Church may grow larger and larger, may have, I mean, more and more persons for her members—and that those who are members of the Church may become more and more like what Christ is : pure, and truthful, and loving, and (in short) *holy*.

Will the Church be always like what the Church is now? No. Now, the members of the Church are not all of them good ; many are careless, and many, I am sorry to say, are wicked. Now, the good members of the Church have oftentimes to give in to the bad members ; they cannot have all things as they would like, that is, as God would like. And the people of the world do not like the Church : because she has in her so many good members ; so many people who are trying to please God and Christ, and to follow as the Holy Ghost teaches them. And the more the members of the Church strive to bring other people into the Church's company for the glory of Christ their King, so much the more will the world hate them. Moreover, the Church is now very much divided ; some parts of her will not hold fellowship with some other parts of her ; and a great many of her members—people who were baptized when they were children—will have nothing to do with their lawful Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, but set up teachers for themselves

instead, according to their own likings. (This is called the sin of *schism*.) And then, too, some members of the Church—many thousands, indeed,—are dead, and their bodies are decaying in the grave. Their spirits, indeed, are alive, and so they can still love God and pray to Him ; but they cannot praise God, as they used to do, with their *tongues* ; and they cannot work for Him with their bodies at all. Now this is a great disadvantage.

We look however for a time when all the holy Christian dead will have their bodies raised from the grave, and made glorious ; and their spirits, souls, and bodies will be joined together again, not to be parted any more. This will be the beginning of what we call the Resurrection. The bodies of the holy dead will be made, each in a single moment, just like what Christ's Body is now ; there will be no sin in them, or anything about them which could tempt at all to sin. In those bodies they will live for ever with Christ, in joy and blessedness unspeakable.

When the holy Christian dead have been raised, those persons also who are then alive on the earth, and who have served Christ faithfully, and are looking for Him, and ready for Him, will have their bodies changed, so as to be like the bodies which their fellow Christians will have who had died. These will get their glorified bodies at once, and without having to die at all : they will only have to wait for their

glorified bodies until the holy Christian dead have been raised.

But meanwhile, there will be many members of the Church who will not have got quite ready for Christ; and many also, alas! who are not ready for Him at all, but who will have hated and persecuted His messengers. Thus, while some will have become better and better, the rest will have become worse and worse.* And at last a very wicked person will rise up, who will set himself against whatever is called God, and not allow men to worship any God except himself. And this wicked person (you may call him *Antichrist*,) will have everything his own way, and Satan will make him able to do some kinds of miracles;† and those who follow Antichrist will get the upper hand, and will do all the harm they can to Christ's faithful servants; so that Christ's faithful servants will begin to think that it is no longer of any use to serve God, but that they may just as well run after Antichrist.

But just then the Lord will show Himself, come back to our earth, in His own glory, and in His Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy Angels. The Angels will be with Him, and likewise those Christians whom He has

* "Let both grow together until the harvest."—S. Matt. xiii. 30.

† See 2 Thess. ii.; Dan. xi. 21, xii. 1; S. Luke xviii. 8.

gathered to Himself. Every eye will see Him, for His coming will be like the lightning which shines all over the sky at once, so that we can see it when our backs are turned ; and all people in the world, except the faithful members of His Church, will be full of the most intense fear and terror. Antichrist and his party will call upon the rocks to fall upon them, and upon the hills to cover them ; but all will be in vain. The Lord Jesus Christ will come with the brightness of devouring fire, and will burn up Antichrist, and all the Lord's other enemies.

As soon as this has been done, the Lord will see His Church all pure and as she ought to be ; for all the wicked members of the Church will have been destroyed, and all the good members of the Church will have been made quite good ; and all will have their new bodies, living and pure, and glorious : one great and splendid army.

What will be the next thing ? The next thing will be that the Lord will reign over the earth and over all the people in it. And the Lord will make His saints to reign with Him ; and all who have loved and served Him in this life will have some honour given to them, and power over some part of the world ; and those will have most power who have served the Lord best. There will still be some people in the world who will not love the Lord, and will only serve Him because of their being

forced to do so;* but those people will not be allowed to have things in their way. The Lord will be King, and wickedness, though not rooted out of the world altogether, will nevertheless be brought quite down.† Think what a happy time that will be!

I am sorry to say that the wicked people will try once more to shake off the Lord's government. But when they have gathered themselves together with this intent, then fire will come down from heaven and devour them. And the Lord will sit upon a great white throne, and all the rest of the dead will be brought out of their graves, and the Lord and His saints will judge the whole world.‡ And those who have done good will be taken into eternal life, and those who have done evil, and have not repented, will be sent into eternal fire. Then the world will be burnt up, and made again into another beautiful world, without any sin in it at all.

The time when the Lord will come again, nobody knows. But He has been away from us so long now, and the world is getting so very wicked, that many Christians expect Him to come soon. He told us Himself that He will

* This is the meaning of the Scriptural expression, "Thine enemies shall be found liars unto Thee;" they shall yield Thee a feigned service through compulsion.

† See Mal. iv.; S. Luke xix. 15-27; Rev. xx. 1-6.

‡ Rev. xx. 7, xxi. 8; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 8.

come when people least expect Him.* Meanwhile He has allowed you and me to be members of His Church ; and if we abide in the Church's fellowship without departing from it, and if we try to become very holy, and if we try to do all our lawful work in the best way for Christ's sake, we shall not be shut out from that glory which He will bring to all faithful members of His Church when He comes again.

One reason why we keep the season of Advent every year, is in order to remind ourselves and one another, how our Master will come again. And I hope, my dear children, that as each Advent season comes round, it will find you and me more and more ready against the time when He *does* come.

HYMN.

The Lord Who for mankind was born,
The Lord Who for us died,
And rose again, and went to heaven,
Up to His Father's side,

Shall to the earth return again,
Brighter than sun at noon,
Just as He went, in human flesh,
And none can tell how soon,

The holy dead He then will raise,
The living saints will change ;

* Luke xxi. 35.

Each in his several order,* He
His army† will array.

New bodies, free from all disease,
And pure, and bright, and fair,
Like to his own, all glorious,
He does‡ for them prepare.

And with His saints upon this earth
He'll reign, the Prince of Peace,
King over all, in righteousness,
And sin and pain shall cease.

Meanwhile, within His holy Church,
He wills us to abide,
That we, one holy brotherhood,
May be His spotless Bride.

And He His ministers has given,
The four-faced cherubim,§
To build us up, and train, and teach,
And make us meet for Him.

* 1 Cor. xv. 28.

† Ps. cx. 8; Rev. xix. 14.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 1, 2.

§ Whatever other mystical meanings may have been intended in the vision vouchsafed to Ezekiel (Ezek. i.; x.), there can be no doubt that the vision had reference to the four forms of ministry given to the Church at the first. This is evidently implied in that tradition of the Church which ascribes one of the cherubic forms to each of the four Gospel-writers as an emblem: the lion to S. Matthew, the angel with man's face to S. Mark, the ox to S. Luke, and the eagle to S. John. For in S. Matthew, the recorder of the laws of the kingdom (Matt. v., &c.) and of so many Parables of the kingdom (Matt. xiii.) we see the commanding character of the *Apostle*,—in S. Mark, who brings his books with

Apostles, chief, and Prophets next,
Evangelists beside,
And Pastors in His tenderness
He did for us provide.*

And in each several Church He sets
His holy orders three,—
Bishops, and Priests, and Deacons too,—
His ministers to be.

And He will guide and guard His flock,
And keep us in His ways,
And lead us on from strength to strength,
To God the Father's praise,

Till He in us, and we in Him,
Our perfect bliss attain ;
Then God the Father, ALL in all,
Will over all things reign.†

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God Whom we adore,
Be glory ; as it was, is now,
And shall be evermore. Amen.

[For the above lines in their present form, the writer
is indebted to the kindness of a friend.]

the words "The beginning of the *Gospel* of Jesus Christ," we trace the lineaments of the *Evangelist*,—in S. Luke, who alone records the Parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son, we clearly have the *Pastor*, sympathising with men's weaknesses and sorrows,—while the *Prophetic* ministry evidently belongs to S. John, the seer of the Apocalypse, and who, as on eagle's wings and with eagle's sight, soars far upwards into the heavenly places.

* Eph. iv. 11-18.

† 1 Cor. xv. 28.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What will be done hereafter to the bodies of the holy Christian dead?

What will be done to the bodies of living Christians who have been faithful to the Lord? Will these have to die?

Will people in the world be getting better and better as time goes on, or worse and worse?

Who will rise up at last? What will he do?

How will the doings of Antichrist and his party be brought to an end?

What do we expect that the Lord and His saints will do next?

Will the world last for ever? What will become of it?

What season do we keep for the purpose of remembering these things?

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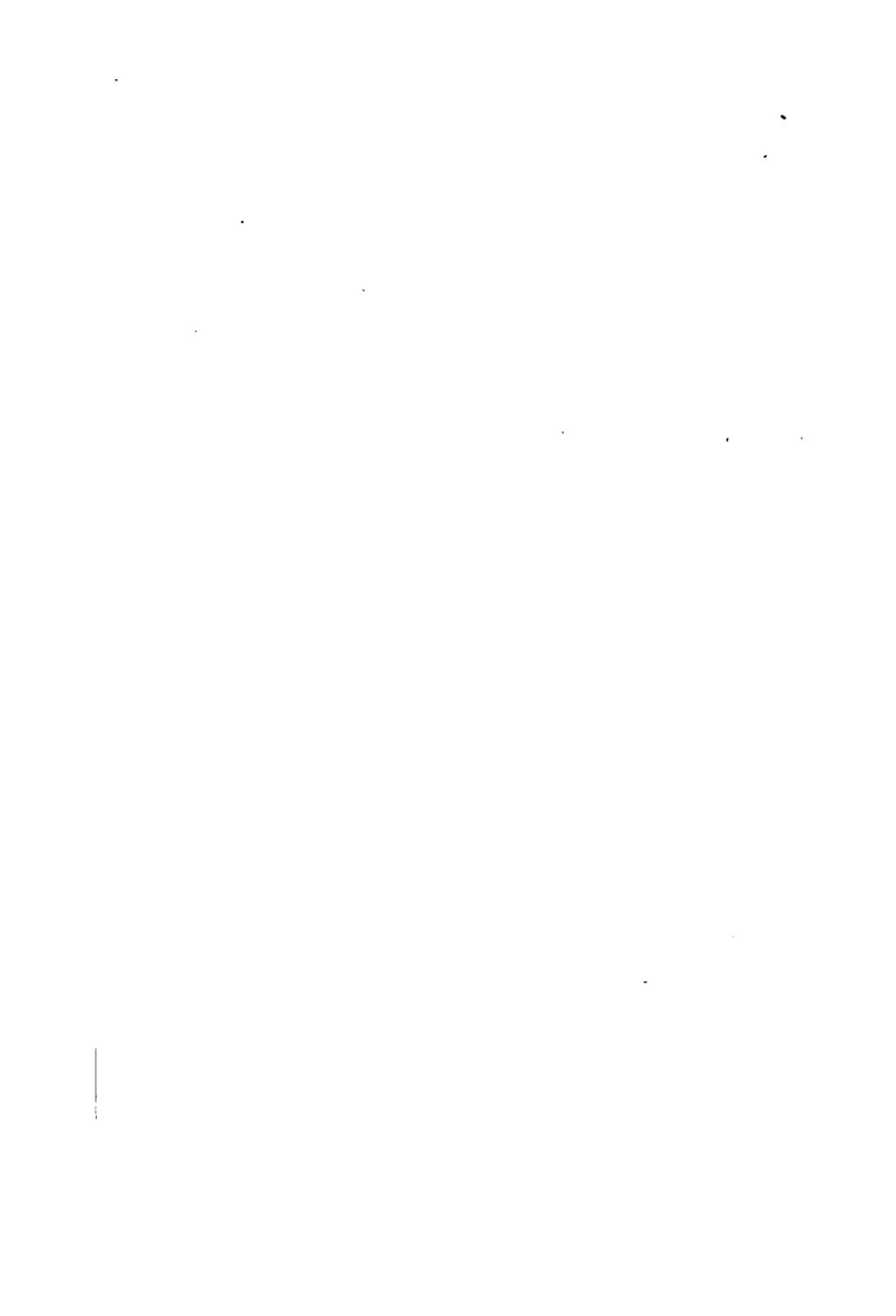
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